

DENIZENS^{of the} DREAMINGTM



For Changeling: The DreamingTM

SENIORS ^{of the} DREAMING™



by Christopher Howard
with Tadd McDivitt

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Let's go

KUREKSARRA TWILIGHT

Punctuated by black columns of smoke, the red Kureksarra Plains spread before Warleader Azag in all their rocky magnificence. Battered but unbent, Azag leaned heavily on his great scimitar and surveyed the carnage below, his massive hand shielding his eyes from twin setting suns. Hot, soot-laden wind lifted his tattered cloak and teased his black beard as his eyes swept along the jagged dragon-tooth ring of the Splintered Mountains. Their twisted peaks stabbed impossibly high into the fiery sunset, casting long black and purple shadows across the land. The wind blew from the Eastlands, carrying with it smoky remnants of the great firestorm that had blown through a week before. Unfortunate parosemes and other wind spirits, along with more malignant creatures of sickness and fire, swam in the clouds' billowing embers, their cacophonous dirge echoing throughout the land. Azag grunted his contentment at the day's victory, a deceptively simple exclamation which drew an equally short but sophisticated animal reply from his aged uncle, Chorak, who stood with six other warriors nearby.

The creatures that lay below them had fought well and with abilities Azag had never seen. They burned with supernatural fire and some had as many as a dozen arms. Their ferocity and sheer numbers had nearly pressed the already divided fir-bholg fiefdom to its knees, but their ignorance of the realm proved their undoing. Despite their savagery, they

seemed confused, almost amnesiac. Azag used this to his advantage. Now his men rounded up prisoners below, tying their captives to killing posts and hacking them to pieces in the animal frenzy of their victory dance. Any survivors would go to the great flaying machine to force their origin from their lips, amnesia or no. The Silver River fir-bholg had held this portion of the Red Plains since time out of memory and Azag would be damned if that would change under his reign.

This attack from the Eastlands was the first test of Azag's mettle as the tribe's warleader after his mother's death. He had acquitted himself well. Carrion birds lazily circled the darkening fields, but Azag's eyes focused on movement from another quarter. Leta, beloved consort and comrade-in-arms, strode up the pathway toward him, her leonine gait beautiful and predatory. Armor torn in several places and charred in others, still she grinned triumphantly as she approached. Azag returned the smile, gathering her into a forceful embrace before his men, his powerful stag's antlers locking with her shorter, curved horns. Their mouths wrestled in a fierce animal kiss, which Leta ended with a small bite, drawing a delicious wisp of blood from his lip. Her love and passion nourished Azag like a banquet

fed a starving man. Uncle Chorak gave a wolfish grin of approval.

"H'rah, my lady, it seems you are somewhat the worse for wear since I saw you last," said Azag, mindful that his men awaited new orders.

"And you no less, my lord and love," she laughed. "These damned spiders, 'naraka,' they call themselves. Do they serve the Red Court?"

"Perhaps. The firestorm has blown the flotsam and jetsam of a dozen distant realms upon our borders over the past week, but the naraka are the most worrisome. Their coming portends death and other poisonous spirits travel in their wake. Almost a quarter of our clan has fallen ill. I hear it is even worse in other strongholds. The Red Dream awakens, despite our seers' assurances; even the Five Great Beasts are in turmoil."

"Well, we have given them pause enough today," interrupted Chorak, licking the blood from his ax for emphasis.

Azag and Leta laughed their agreement with the old warrior's sentiment, but Azag remained troubled. The fir-bholg had been pressed hard over the past centuries merely to survive. Once, the great Beast-Kings had ruled over all they could see, meting out pain or pleasure as they saw fit. After their victory over the ancient fomorian courts in the time-before-time, however, the Men of Bholg had suffered defeat at the hands of the hated Tuatha dé Danaan and had since fallen even further. Barbarous foes surrounded them on all sides — the fuaths of the forest lands, the Bright Ones



and the Middlemarch redcaps to name but a few. Leta and Chorak walked ahead on their way back to the Silver River fastness, laughing and boasting about the day's exploits. Azag brooded, eyeing the great bone-like machines that loomed on either side of the path. Their form and function had changed a thousand times over the centuries since the fall of the Beast-Kings. Current fir-bholg seers could only divine the simplest devices' function. Torn from his weighty concerns by Leta's sharp hiss, Azag snapped to bestial alertness as his eyes spotted the signal light from atop a nearby tower. Someone, or something, was approaching.

Azag and his men melted swiftly into the shadows; if it was the naraka, they would rue the day they entered the realm of the beast-men. The intruder's speed was impressive; mercurial blackness flowed through late twilight shadows, accompanied by the sound of clattering hooves. Two of Azag's men leapt from their perch with a guttural shout, casting a wide net across the narrow passage. Two more appeared from behind, swords drawn. The shadow form spun on its fell mount in an affronted manner. A cold, damp stench permeated the passage and the two net-men fell dead, their screams mixing with a sound like snapping twigs. The first swordsman lunged, sweeping with his short blade and drawing a ragged

hiss from the darkling entity before he too fell, his neck gouting blood. The intruder hissed, its rasping voice hinting at dry rot and unwholesome death. Then Azag and his men were upon it. The creature — here a patch of bare bone, there of black armor — twisted and turned with nearly unimaginable speed and ferocity. Another of Azag's men fell dead, but at last the weight of their numbers brought it down. Azag ended the melee with a well-aimed blow to its head and the creature's dark steed fled shrieking into the night.

The noise summoned more of Azag's clan who brought heavy, barbed chains to bind the prisoner. The creature, now clearly visible, was a skeletal cadaver of a man. His hollow, corpse-like eyes flashed yellow in the light of their torches. Horrendous old wounds ravaged the captive. Azag realized they had only triumphed over it because the creature was already hurt by another, more potent, enemy. The warleader shuddered to think of the chained creature in its prime. Despite the creature's alien appearance, it was its fallen possession that most attracted Azag's attention. In the dust lay a black stone box without key or lid. When Azag picked the object up, it seemed to pull, gently but insistently, to the east. Emblazoned on its surface was a black serpent coiled around a golden tower — the symbol of Harroth the Mute, one of the

Five Beasts. He was also one of the Bright Ones, called *sidhe* by some.

The *sidhe* claimed kinship with the *fir-bholgs'* ancient foes, the *Tuatha dé Danaan*. Harroth's brood also claimed kinship with the *fomorian*s and openly courted the distant White Court, making him doubly dangerous in Azag's mind. Harroth commanded not only *sidhe*, but ogres, redcaps and other fearsome creatures. Many of Azag's own people — barbaric *fir-bholg* cousins from the Dark Vale — served Harroth or one of the other Beasts. Like the other so-called Great Beasts, Harroth Balor sought the shattered pieces of the Triumph Casque of Sorrows wielded by the last great *fomorian* king at the end of the War of the Trees. Now with the Red Court once again on the verge of making, perhaps this box contained part of the lost key to the casque.

"Bring him," Azag growled.

The cadaver would not speak, nor even scream. Maddening. The great flaying wheels slowly scissored away chunks of its body in a vain attempt to wring the truth from its throat, at last reducing the creature to strips of twitching flesh and tendon before the pale yellow light finally left its eyes. Azag bit his lip, trying to push down his disgust. Not at the torture, for it was a harsh truth that such things were necessary (though Leta chose not to watch), but that such a creature existed at all. Its silence was no sign of bravery, for it soon became obvious that it experienced neither pain nor pleasure

— an anathema to the passionate fir-bholg. A captured naraka did not do quite as well against the machine, spitting his defiance for some time before the master confessor finally tore down his resolve. The prisoner confessed that he and the other invaders were indeed amnesiac, but that they had fallen under the serpent and tower banner in return for Harroth's aid in regaining their lost past. Azag had to admit some admiration for the enemy warrior's resistance and rewarded him with a swift death.

Finally, exhausted, Azag took to his bed in the high tower of his bone fortress for the first time in three nights. Leta was still abroad, ordering the organization of the clan's defenses. As Azag lay his round helm upon a table, his long black hair cascaded around his weathered face. He studied the coffer with its serpentine emblem; there was much to consider and he did not know where next to turn. A sharp knock interrupted his thoughts. Ardifal, his shield bearer, appeared at his command to enter.

"A soothsayer has come and begs permission to speak with you, master," said Ardifal. Normally Azag did not entertain such charlatans, sending them away with hands bound and pelted by stones and excrement — if they were lucky. Still, there were some who truly knew the ways of Dán and the moment seemed propitious.

The seer was not what Azag expected. Grizzled old pooka skinchangers or women of a disfavored Bholg clan were

the most common diviners in the Red Plains. This woman was small and lacked the horns, fur or other animal features most often seen in that clime. She was pale and fragile. Long fiery red hair fell in ringlets around her sharp features. She wore a simple white robe and sandals that seemed ill suited to the terrain she must have traversed to reach the tower. She could almost pass for one of the Bright Ones, but her beauty was muted and did not radiate the terror and magnificence that marked the first children of Dana. Azag thought he could crush her between two fingers, but something in her gaze gave him pause.

"So, vagabond, what brings you to me? Have you come to read my palm or sing for your supper? Perhaps you wish to help yourself to my treasury's fire-gems? Speak! If your jests amuse me, you will leave here unharmed. If not..." The smile died on his lips along with his bravado. Something about the woman's eyes — knowing, unchallenging and amused — pierced his very soul.

"No, fiery lordling. I come not for reward, but to bring you advice — and a warning," her voice tripped melodiously like the Silver River in spring, yet portended gathering storm.

"Then you honor me with your presence," he mocked, though she seemed

impervious to his sarcasm or his intimidation.

"Yes," she agreed. "The loom of fate binds you tightly to that which has fallen into your possession. You hold the fate of your kingdom, if not the entire Dreaming in your barbarian hands."

"You speak of the box? It is the Casque of Sorrows?" he whispered.

"No, though its time, too, shall come again. The Red Court awakens and holds its first torporous reune since time forgotten. Some served the Red Dream's cause even as it slumbered; these now seek to spread the red fomorians' path of blood and pain to the source of all things."

"The firestorm! Was that the Red Court's doing?" exclaimed Azag, his suspicion and warrior's cynicism evaporating in the bright dawn of sudden revelation.

"In a sense, though it stemmed from another source. A power from outside the Dreaming has played its allotted role and is no more. Poor Ravnos, so timeless, ambitious and doomed," she sighed. "His passing has broken the chains which bound the Red Court to the Splintered Peaks and once again the red fomorians enter their ageless cities. The White Court is already abroad in the Forest of Lies. If the Red Court should regain its full

senses, then so too shall stir the Green Court and all will become Black..."

She did not need to finish. Azag and a dozen rulers before him had fought the Red Court's worshipers for too long to diminish the disaster of such an event. His own advisors predicted that the End-of-All-Things would not occur for another hundred generations, yet in the endless carnage that surrounded Kureksarra, it was easy to think of this in the present tense.

"But then, your seers' record has been less than impressive of late..." The woman did not utter the words, but it was clear from her eyes and infuriating half-sidhe smile what she was thinking.

"Then what shall be done?" he asked, angry, confused, even a little frightened. His enemies were numerous and allies hard to find, especially since the cursed Asterlan had slain the Lord of the Mountains.

"Why, you must take the box to the Source of All Things, of course. The casque is a key that shall find its own lock if you will permit it."

"The Source of All — ?"

"The Flesh Realms. The land of men," she said, her voice now hinting that she was patronizing a simpleton.

"Humans? Phah! Our lore-speakers tell of such creatures in a far-away land and even of those called the Beaker People who once served us. They are the product of children's dreams, nothing more," he said, his voice trapped between derision and wonder. "Besides,

why would such a weak and primitive creature be the source of all things?"



"Fool!"

She stepped forward, a simple action far more menacing to Azag than her dainty form suggested. He felt strangely like a hare transfixed by the serpent's gaze.


"You have had your advice. Now, little chieftain, your warning..." The melodic voice dissipated, swallowed up by a raven-croak; the woman's youthful features aged into those of an ancient crone. "The keremet — the creature you slew — its box has its pull; you felt it; did you not? Despite their power, your enemies among the sidhe are replete with weaknesses. They must exchange their souls with those of their human receptacles to gain their ends in the Autumn World. This box holds one such human soul, a soul exchanged for that of Harroth Balor no less. You see the Mute as one more enemy in these blood-soaked planes, but he is far more, and his entry into the Waking makes him a danger to the true order of things; he defies Sata's wheel in his cursed arrogance. Your concern for your people makes you an ideal agent for Sate in this matter, and by serving us you serve yourself. The old Paths of Balor are opened once more and the path lies clear. It is not often that the Sisters Three give such a warning; disregard it at your peril." The woman was close to him now, her breath hot on his face. For a moment, he felt as weak as an infant. Then she was gone and Azag was shouting for his fastest messenger.







INTRODUCTION: THE WAY THE WORLD ENDS



The late Autumnal winds blow cold with new signs and portents. Endless Winter has arrived. The fae realms, which reflect humanity's dreams, feel Winter's hoarfrost chill before it makes its final presence known in the principalities of flesh. Dark currents that underlie the human psyche take physical form in the faerie lands. Every nightmare or jarred and broken spirit in the Autumn World — every instance of ethnic cleansing, torture or child abuse — contributes another fearsome blight, indelibly carved into the Dreaming. The edifice of rationality and reason, created by humankind to protect itself from the dark, collapses under its own banal weight.

The World of Darkness' journey toward night has been a long one. No longer content to ramble slowly down the shadowed path to final ruin, the voyage toward utter dark now lurches forward in great, sudden bursts of speed. Each momentous event sets off an even greater

one in a geometric progression that swiftly grows beyond the control of even the greatest powers.

In the world of the fae, recent events have taken on an especially dire aspect. In 1969 the return of the *sidhe* signified a momentous event in the history of the earth-bound fae, unprecedented in over six long centuries since the Shattering. The Kithain greeted the Resurgence, with its vast changes to both the fae's political and physical surroundings, with mixed emotions. Long dead arteries of dream reopened and the magic returned. Protected by the Silver Path and by other ancient markers, changelings, long bound to the Autumn Lands, once again explored their dream-spun heritage. Some Earthbound fae rejoiced, believing at first that such an event would change the world for the better, rejoining the long divided lands of flesh and dream. They should have known better; for where there are dreams, there are also nightmares. The rejoining of the two worlds led not

to a new age of harmony, but to a time of greater conflict as the newly empowered fae battled each other. Pitting court against court, noble against commoner, the Kithain's newfound access to the Dreaming fed age-old animosities. Still, the Dream Realms known to most changelings fell into a rough sort of equilibrium after the early shocks of the Accordance War. For a while, it seemed as if the center might yet hold.

Now, a mere 30 years after the watershed events of the Resurgence, another, perhaps greater event rocks the world of the Kithain. While the fae battle for mastery over the Near Dreaming and its environs, more chthonic forces continue their inexorable climb to the light of human consciousness. Swaddled in the tenebrous realms of the Far and Deep Dreaming, these forces now make their move. Still mostly shrouded in shadow, new creatures emerge.

Additionally, recent events in the flesh realms, the inscrutable designs of the prodigals, have had devastating repercussions in the Dreaming. Because of these and other events, old paths never touched by the Silver Path's protective embrace have reopened with a vengeance. Over the past year the Paths of Balor and other nightmare trods, long thought extinct or sealed forever by ancient magic, have sprung back to life. First in a trickle, then a deluge, these old paths disgorge alien, often hostile beings onto the shores of the Near Dreaming, even encroaching on the physical realms. Dark chimera, Thallain and other fell creatures walk without fear in lands long thought tamed by the Kithain, with seemingly little respect for either kith or court. Perhaps most troubling of these new arrivals are those whom the Kithain know collectively as Dark-kin.

Denizens

The list of creatures found in the Dreaming is long and varied. Changelings, Thallain, chimera, nunnehi and inanimae each represent a different faerie pedigree and a different thread in Fate's tapestry. **Denizens of the Dreaming** is a book about the fae who have long been sundered from the Autumn Lands and whose return is a matter of very recent record. Changelings differ from most other fae species and, until now, have held a unique and privileged position. Swathed in human flesh, they walk with equal facility in both the Dreaming and Autumn Realms. Those creatures that the Kithain call Denizens straddle the division between the earthly fae and wholly spiritual entities such as chimera. Alien yet strangely familiar, these entities are more closely related

to the Kithain than one might first suspect. Once the various kiths now known as changelings existed wholly as creatures of spirit and dream, yet dwelled side by side with humanity. During the Shattering, as the cold winds of Banality grew, the Kithain underwent the Changeling Way Ritual, clothing themselves in human flesh to survive. Other spirits retreated into the Dreaming.

Kithain arbitrarily called these creatures "Dark-kin" because of their vile reputation as servitors of the Elder Darks. Despite their abrupt departure from human lands, the Denizens (or "adhene" to use the old parlance) maintained a direct, albeit subtle, connection to the human psyche. Personifying various aspects of human dreams or fears, the number of adhene species is vast and varied. Of no single genesis, these "first cousins" of the Kithain grew and changed along with humanity, even as some forgot their Earthly origins. Now, the old dream roads lie open again and these long-departed spirits find themselves once more free to explore the realms of their birth.

Using This Book

Denizens of the Dreaming, the first *Arthaus* book for **Changeling: The Dreaming** in the year 2000, is a book of nightmares. This sourcebook presents not only the darker aspects of the Dreaming — alien Denizens, nightmare trods and the imminent return of the fomorians — but also the ways in which they affect the Autumn World. The Year of the Reckoning has come and gone, leaving behind a whole new host of problems for the fae. Starting with this book, the world inhabited by the changelings becomes much more dangerous. This does not necessarily mean the series will inexorably follow a path toward Endless Winter, but the **Changeling** line will undergo a number of tumultuous changes in the coming years.

Denizens is meant for use by both players and Storytellers alike. Each of the adhene described in this book are fully detailed player character archetypes and may be used in either a Denizens-only troupe or mixed in with parties that feature more familiar changeling kiths. Alternately, a Storyteller may choose to use the creatures in this book solely as Storyteller characters to spice up an ongoing chronicle. Sections suggested for Storyteller use only are clearly marked. Further, this text departs somewhat from the familiar faeries of Celtic folklore to explore the fae of several other world cultures. **Denizens of the Dreaming** cannot pretend to represent the vast variety of such creatures, merely giving a representative sampling

of the many creatures of dream once again abroad in the World of Darkness.

Chapter One: Things Fall Apart explores the unique history of the Dark-kin and the shared heritage that forever sets them apart from, and at odds with, the Kithain. It also delves into the recent events which have enabled (or necessitated) their return.

Chapter Two: The Winds of Change gives information on the Denizens and their environs, as well as the changes that their abrupt emergence from the Tenebrous Realms have wrought in the more familiar Dream Realms.

Chapter Three: The Sleep of Reason details information on each of the Dark-kin usable by both players and Storytellers alike.

Chapter Four: Building the Perfect Beast provides complete character creation rules for Denizen characters, as well as new Merits, Flaws, Backgrounds and some potent new Arts hitherto only rumored by changeling mystics.

Chapter Five: By the Silver Banned offers advice to Storytellers on how best to create a chronicle based on the exploits of the Dark-kin or how to incorporate them into an existing Changeling chronicle.

Appendix: Nightmare Gallery details notable individuals, Dark-kin and otherwise, who seek to prevent or profit from the Denizens' return.

Other Sources

This book draws both information and inspiration from several other sources. Besides **Changeling: The Dreaming 2nd Edition**, this book references material found in **Nobles: The Shining Host**; **Pour L'Amour et Liberte: The Book of Houses II**; **Inanimae: The Secret Way**; **Dreams and Nightmares** and **Time of Thin Blood** (a sourcebook for **Vampire: The Masquerade**). Though not necessary to utilize this book they may add to its scope and enjoyment.

Lexicon

Adhene (AD-heen): Old Form word for all the Denizens of a given race. This term is sometimes used to refer to all Denizens everywhere.

Ariá (AH-ree-ah): The triad of forms and emotional states exhibited by each Denizen. The three Ariá are the Dioniae (base instincts), the Araminae (the everyday psyche) and the Apolliae (the "higher-self").

Augmen: The tendency for Denizens to lose power as they approach the Autumn Realms.

Banal Shiver: The poisonous seed of Banality inherent to the changeling mixed breeds. Denizens do not start with this, but may gain it by overexposure to the mundane world.

Denizen: Also known as Dark-kin, those fae nominally in the service of the fomorians, banished from the Autumn World after the War of Trees. The Denizens in this book include acheri, aonides, fir-bholg, fuaths, keremet, moiræ and naraka.

The Evanescent: Denizens who stayed on Earth during the Miririm. The so-called Evanescent adhene include the aonides, keremet and moiræ.

The Fading Path: The Denizen term for the path followed by the changelings who followed the Tuatha dé Danaan.

Lords of the Mound: A noble adhene related to the trolls, now extinct.

Meridianus (MER-id-e-AH-nus): A void-like realm of violent winds and shadow chimera left by the Tuatha dé Danaan to guard against the Denizens.

Miririm (MIR-i-rim): Literally, "The Eclipse," this is the period beginning with the end of the Tesseractonta during which the Dark-kin were banished from the Waking.

Overlords: The non-fomorian generals of the Fomorian Dream. The most potent of Dark-kin who have the fomorians' ear, or even older species (such as the spider-like Aslynthi).

The Silver Ban: The ban enacted by the Tuatha dé Danaan that banished the Denizens from the waking world and keeps them from walking the Silver Path.

Tarrarom (TAIR-a-rom): Eruptions of dark Glamour during the Miririm in which some of the Evanescent came to the waking realms.

Tenebrous Realms: Those realms off the Silver Path, little known by the changelings but inhabited by the Denizens.

Tesseractonta (TESS-ara-konta): Known to the changelings as "The War of Trees," this was the last great conflict between the Tuatha dé Danaan and the fomorians.





CHAPTER ONE: THINGS FALL APART

*Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned....
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?
— William Butler Yeats, "The Second Coming"*

History of the Dark-kin

There are those luminaries in the World of Darkness who now see the totality of history as a long, inevitable stumble toward Armageddon. Given the bleak present, perhaps they can be forgiven their cynicism. In a dim, distant past, changeling graybeards profess that once there was balance. Great evil existed to be sure, Elder Darks that stretched their shadow across the land, killing by merest touch. But light also flourished. Where one appeared, the cycle of creation, the natural wax and wane of nature, dictated that the other would surely follow.

Things now lack balance; night isn't followed by day but by twilight, then another night. Lord and commoner, Seelie and Unseelie alike wonder what went wrong.

Fimbulwinter and the Time of Legends

In the beginning all was darkness and (paradoxically) all was light. The earliest dreams of humanity both formed and reflected its environment. Seeking to comprehend and control its surroundings, humanity gave name and nature to the beings that coexisted with it, and in so doing formed a world it could never hope to fully

conquer or understand. In the demiurgic light of unwrought possibility, all things could be, and humanity created its first gods and monsters. The Fimbulwinter Country and the Time of Legends were opposite sides of the same coin. In keeping with the Dreaming's nature, they were periods of time, places and a state of mind all at once. As with all things in the Dream Realms, these statements are partly lies, but lies spoken so often that they have become true.

Arising from this riddle, the earliest darks, the fomorians, strode the Earth like colossi. Those who wandered into the dark woods or over the hills beyond their village fell prey to shadows that suddenly lengthened and swallowed their victims whole. Even for those who stayed in the safety of familiar lands, the darkness was never far afield. But there was beauty as well, perhaps terrible and strange or comforting and familiar. Each of these desires or fears took solid form, fulfilling this need or that role. The most powerful of these early dreams were those creatures that hid in the dark. If the fomorians were the worst — great chthonic entities whose evil was beyond human ken — so too were there smaller evils that reflected man's darkest impulses. From these dreams came the redcaps and numerous other bogeymen. Eldest among these were the fir-bholg, strange creatures who straddled the divide between beasts and men. Indeed, so potent were these ancient beast-kings and queens, who hunted like wild animal packs but used the tools of men, that for a time they reigned supreme. The horror and awe they inspired was such that humanity's dreams empowered them to cast down even the fomorians — at least for a while.

Humans, however, were more than horrified animals and wanted more from their gods than mere killers in the dark. They aspired to greatness; their young and vibrant souls yearned for deliverance from bondage. In answer to their call, the Tuatha dé Danaan and other demigods arose to cast down the Elder Darks, fomorian and fir-bholg alike, and for a time took the role of benign despots, meting out justice to their subjects/creators. From these first great god-monarchs came the other fae, those who would eventually become the changelings, Denizens and some of the other creatures of the Dreaming. Among these were other great protectors such as the trolls or the noble adhenes called the Lords of the Mound. Or at least so goes one version of the faerie tale....

Parables of original sin suggest another: Perhaps humanity at first lived in peace and beauty and its darker urges tore down its idyllic surroundings as humans have done so many times since. It hardly matters. What was important was the balance.

As it was in Ireland, home of so many changeling kith, so it was with a thousand other creation myths throughout the world. In another culture on the other side of the world, pre-Vedic India and ancient Persia dream-cast its own bewildering array of creatures. Among these a class of beneficent creatures called Asuras included the naraka, chaotic but civilized poets and philosophers who lived in high style in castles made of gems, and the healing acheri. Ancient and adaptable, these creatures made the leap from animistic pagan totems to polytheistic conceptual entities without missing a beat. Hindu mythology took hold, transmuting the Asuras into demons. The naraka's artistry took on a new and malevolent cast as they went about punishing sinners in the 21 Hindu Hells. The healing touch of the acheri now brought sickness, corruption and death. And so it went: Each continent, country and hamlet developed its own traditions, seemingly different and startlingly the same. In each place resided an archetypal elder darkness and a guiding light, twin pillars of humanity's collective unconscious.

Even in the Time of Legends, everyday life was hard. People toiled long hours to keep body and soul together; thus appeared the spirits of hearth, home and field. Such stories may have given rise to the familiar boggans, but through a mirror darkly it also gave birth to the fuaths. In a time without medical learning, death walked the land, giving birth to the legends of the keremet. Unique among the faerie races, the keremet were humans who, upon the verge of death, were snatched from Heaven or Hell to wander the Dreaming and finish some uncompleted task. Distantly related to the bean sidhe in genesis, the keremet eventually gave rise to such traditions as the Wild Hunt or the French L'Armée Furieuse who chased the souls of the damned. Humanity did not wish to see the world as a place of random chance and so constructed order, harmony and fate. From these oracular desires sprang the Ladies of Destiny, called Fates or Norms, in whose service strode the moiræ. Lastly, humanity desired beauty, culture and art. These pursuits lifted the human spirit beyond its concern for mere survival and created some of the most potent dreams of all. From these came the



aonides, more commonly known as the Muses of Greece and Rome.

All of these creatures and a thousand more besides walked the paths that passed freely between flesh and dream. Each was created from humanity's secret hopes and fears, but they had their own dreams, desires, agendas and powers far beyond those of their human creators. It was only a matter of time before the question arose: Who was the puppet and who the puppeteer?

The Sundering

Human and fae, mutually dependent and equally proud, stared at each other across an abyss of hatred, distrust and fear. It mattered little that there was also great love, honor and admiration, for in the end the former impulses prevailed. This was the Sundering, a period as ill-defined in when it began as in the forces that drove it. It has been said that the prodigals had a hand in it. Jealous blood-drinkers in growing cities saw humanity as their own private demesne while human mystics learned to control forces that had little to do with the

lords of dream and wielded them to "free" humanity from what they saw as an alien tyranny. Cold iron and disbelief played a role, splitting the formerly entwined worlds in two. New faiths arose and the fae, formerly seen as natural spirits, were vilified as demons and devils. Slowly, inevitably, the good folk lost their hold on the human psyche. Gods became small and even the once nearly divine Tuatha dé Danaan dwindled.

Although it was an age of fading magic, the old gods and spirits didn't surrender the world all at once. An age of great conflict gave rise to stories whose retelling lasted in one form or another for thousands of years. Wars between darkness and light raged across the millennia. The oldest gods, the fomorians and the Tuatha dé Danaan, remained in the world, but faded into the background, leaving the fighting and the dying to the younger races. At the dawn of this age, those who later became Denizens and changelings were little different. As the millennia wore on, fundamental rifts grew between the two camps. Not concerned with the usual wars waged between two kith over territory or Dreamers nor with the differences

between the Seelie and Unseelie Courts, a split arose over differing beliefs on how to deal with humanity, the upstart prodigals and the fate of two worlds.

Despite differences between court and kith, for a time the main schism that rent the fae was between those who chose to stay the course in the waking world and those who wished to take matters into their own hands. The first faction hoped to change humanity's beliefs, subtly luring them back to the fold through the magnificence of their works, or to live lives of separate, fragile splendor in their freeholds. The second group wished to re-assert the glories of the Time of Legends or Fimbulwinter Country, returning humanity to the glories and horrors of the First Age. Behind these hostile philosophies were, as always, the subtle machinations of the old ones. The Tuatha dé Danaan and the fomorians continued their aeons-long game of chess against the backdrop of the human soul. The Children of Dana, long weary of the world and seeking the Far Shores, supported the Fading Path, that which advocated a graceful departure from the Autumn World. The fomorians, still hungry for the sweetmeats of the human soul, wished to stay.

Among the younger races, these divisions appeared mostly along lines of kith (rather than court), with those now called changelings on the first side and the Denizens on the latter —though clearly there were defectors from each philosophy. It is a tribute to the subtleties of the game that ancient enemies such as most sidhe houses and many redcaps ended up on one side of the board, while creatures as traditionally hostile to each other as the fuaths and fir-bholg landed on the other. Old enemies became erstwhile allies; old friendships were cut asunder. The satyrs and aonides, once lovers and friends, now found themselves in opposing camps. Even more tragic was the split between the trolls and their cousins, the Lords of the Mound. Torn by mutual oaths (trolls to the sidhe and the Tuatha dé Danaan, the latter to the fir-bholg), these honorable tribes were trapped in a no-win situation. Nor were all the sides taken in the war based on ideology or honor. The acheri and the naraka simply saw themselves as superior to the human rabble. The acheri in particular desired to wipe the slate clean and return to the old ways, before even the primitive medicines practiced by Hippocrates, when humanity tried to ward off sickness and death by appeasing their angry gods.

Finally, there were those who stood aloof from the burgeoning hostilities. The keremet and the moiræ, both of whom had long filled a unique role in human and fae destiny, observed a studied neutrality. It is rumored that at this time a temple of moiræ violated their geas to always speak the truth in their prophecies. For their crimes, the Wyrd Sisters stripped the memories of their True Names and locked them away into the Dark Dreaming. In the Nightmare Realms, the collective dreams of humanity slowly twisted and changed these spirits. They retained their old abilities, but now they acquired elements of regret and revenge, taking on the aspects of the Erinyes or Furies.

Tessarakonta

The Shattering came early for the Dark-kin. Known to the changelings as the War of Trees, the Tessarakonta was a war that may have lasted forty decades, forty years or forty days. Fought in the Flesh Realms, the timeless environs of the Dreaming and Arcadia itself, the war enwrapped the world with signs of impending Winter. Not merely another epic struggle between the forces of light and dark, the Tessarakonta was a war to determine the very fabric of reality. Vast movements across a hundred realms and magic undreamed of shook land, sea and air. The Firchlis, ever the only constant in the Dreaming, took on a new and cataclysmic importance, changing oceans into fire and burying the airy realms of the paroses beneath the ground. Nor were these dislocations of elemental geography the only permanent change to the Dream Realms. Wars require secure supply routes and, drawing from the Sea of Silver in the Deep Dreaming, the Tuatha dé Danaan built the Silver Path, for use by only those who served them. The so-called Silver Ban, which prevented use of trods protected by the Silver Path, applied to almost all of the Denizens and remains to this day.

Evenly matched in many respects, neither side could gain a decisive advantage. At the forefront of the Denizens were the fir-bholg. Bitter about the throne lost to the Tuatha dé Danaan and their children, many of the beast-men made common cause with their ancient enemies, the fomorians, in an attempt to regain their hold on the human world. Wielding nightmare energies now lost to antiquity, fir-bholg monarchs became living embodiments of the dark Firchlis. At their direction great rivers of screaming blackness scoured thousands of the Tuatha

dé Danaan's warriors from the field. The war reached new depths of desperation on all sides; even the honorable trolls and the noblest of sidhe were forced to use methods they abhorred. On the other side of the lines, the noble Lords of the Mound found their oaths and virtue stretched beyond the breaking point as vassals of the fomorians. In secret reunions, these and other fae sought to re-establish the old balance; they almost succeeded.

Wars are not fought only with weapons and blood, but with secrets and treachery. In the last of the war's Nine Great Battles, the Arcadians and the fomorians met on the Edenic plane of Kureksarra in the Near Dreaming. The violent Firchlís of the conflict tore the moon from the sky and shattered the landscape; the newfound strangeness of its splintered peaks permanently moved it deeper into the Dreaming. At the center of the conflict, the Red King of the fomorians wielded the Triumph Casque of Sorrows, a weapon of unspeakable power. Even unopened, its effects were devastating, raining poison and fire down upon his enemies as they sought to stand against him.

Pursuant to oaths made and broken, the Lords of the Mound attempted to wrest the casque from the Red King's heart, slaying an entire army of their former allies in the process. Betrayal wrought betrayal, and the Dreaming and Fate punished the Lords of the Mound's valiant efforts (and broken oath to the fir-bholg). In the Nightmare Realms that surrounded the fomorian court, the Lords were cut-off from all aid and slaughtered to the last one. Some say the Gwydion sidhe, mistaking them for enemies, fulfilled Fate's decree. Others blame House Balor for the Lords' destruction; still more claim the trolls granted honorable death to their oath-broken cousins. A few claim that the Lords committed mass-suicide to compensate for their deeds.

This action seemed to destroy the will of the fomorian hosts. Perhaps the Lords partially succeeded, making it too costly for the Red King to open the casque and destroy his enemies; perhaps the Red King foresaw that indirect conflict would ultimately be more successful. It matters little. What does matter is that he shattered the casque's key and cast the parts into his enemies' camps where they would sow eternal strife, before plucking the casque from his heart and dying. Routed, his army was forced to flee before the triumphant Arcadians into the tenebrous realms of the Dreaming. The remaining fomorians were trapped by the Tuatha dé Danaan who

imprisoned the White Court in the Forest of Lies and the Red below the Splintered Mountains. The enigmatic Green Court voluntarily went beneath the Sea of Silver. Then, in a final gesture before departing the known Dreaming, the Tuatha dé Danaan made permanent the Silver Ban (in effect barring the defeated Denizens from Earth) and drawing the Mists about the Dreaming, erasing all but the dimmest memories of the war from humanity's mind.

The Mírim

Imprisoned behind a wall of silver, the former allies did not stay together long. Without the fomorians to lead them, the dark armies broke apart in distrust and mutual recrimination. Though barred from many lands by the Silver Path, they found the remaining realms nearly boundless; each adhene went its own separate way. Out of either nostalgia or a desire to catch fresh dreams, some adhene sought to cleave as closely as possible to the Near Dreaming, which remained tantalizingly close to the Flesh Realms but impossible to touch. Among these, the naraka, acheri and the aonides remained closest to the realms of men. The naraka continued to live in their gem-encrusted towers, inaccessible to most silvered trods, but sometimes appearing through the Mists to fae and Dreamers alike. When a great plague or other epidemic swept the Autumn World (for so it now was called), a few acheri might find a temporary passage back to wreak their vengeance on a world that denied them. It was the ever-capricious aonides, however, who had the most luck piercing the Arcadian veil. Connected to humanity's closest dreams — and seen as largely harmless, even beneficial by the victorious changelings — many muses secretly stayed in the realms they cherished. Denizens, of whatever adhene, who managed to stay behind on Earth became known as the Evanescent because of their tendency to disappear from one realm into the other.

Other Denizens became creatures of the Far Dreaming, though only a few mad individuals dared the Deep Realms. Many fuaths, angry at their lost position of prominence in the Autumn Realms, took up places in the Great Forest. There they learned its oldest secrets and harried fae visitors unwise enough to leave the Silver Path. It is whispered that some tended the fomorians of the White Court who slept, imprisoned in the forest's great trees, while others sought to live their own lives, wild and free of external influences. The fir-bholg, em-

bittered beast-kings that had gambled all and lost, remained in the Splintered Mountains and Kureksarra to forever remind them of their defeat. There some made common cause with the mountain giants or became caught up in the endless wars of the Red Fields in the hope of regaining the Sorrow Casque and, hence, their revenge. Some built great cities, remembrances of the human realms. But without direct access to humanity's artificing knowledge (and because of the deleterious effects of the Firchlis), the cities and their great machines soon fell into disrepair.

Lastly, the keremet and the moiræ, ever secretive and neutral in the conflict, were allowed to go about their errands unimpeded by the Silver Ban. The keremet, dead humans in fae form, were attracted to the Autumn Realms and most believe that banning them from the Silver Path would have taken more energy than the Tuatha dé Danaan were willing to expend. The keremet continued their private missions of vengeance or salvation, while others became secret messengers between the Autumn Realms and Arcadia. Sometimes appearing in the Autumn Lands (especially to those conversant in Soothsay), the moiræ continued to deliver the edicts of Fate to those who would listen. Their sibylline warnings went unheeded by the victorious sidhe; a fact that many feel contributed to their own ignominious banishment during the Shattering.

The Shattering and Beyond

Of the Shattering, and 600-years-later the Resurgence, the Denizens were well aware. Indeed, with their pestilential powers, the acheri spread the Black Death, both in the Waking and the Dreaming, encouraging the forces of inquisition and hastening the decline of the earthbound fae. As the victors' proud towers fell to Banality and despair, the sidhe and other fae retreated from the Autumn World. Still smarting from their defeat and both real and perceived wrongs, the Denizens along their path of retreat fell upon the fugitives, attempting to mete out their revenge. The Silver Path was still strong, however, and most of these attacks came to naught as the imperious sidhe passed on their way. Only a few foolhardy enough to stray from the path ended up in their enemy's clutches. Time passed. The world changed and with it the Dreaming. The cold touch of Banality withered even parts of the Silver Path and the Denizens (and even darker creatures) had time to plan and attack. Rumors reached the Autumn Realms that Arcadia lay under siege or had fallen from within.

The wisest changelings still don't know the lie or truth of these rumors, but one thing is certain: The moon landing opened the old pathways and the sidhe returned to the waking realms. They left Arcadia in great armies, tall and proud in their saddles. As they passed through each successive barrier of the Mists, however, the Augmen lessened their powers and their enemies lay in wait. Vengeful Dark-kin, bestial servants of the fomorians (known as the "Fell") and other, even darker creatures waylaid the passing nobles. Such was the ferocity of these attacks that the Seelie and Unseelie nobles found common cause. The greatest of these battles took place in the Vale of Mists on the cusp between the Otherwhere and the Autumn Realms. In a desperate rear-guard action twin armies of Seelie and Unseelie sidhe battled their way into the waking world. Injured, dazed and blinking in true sunlight for the first time in six centuries — surrounded by the retreating sounds of their attackers — the sidhe felt victorious. The Accordance War and the reclamation of their rightful thrones still lay ahead. Their memories obscured by the Mists, the sidhe nonetheless felt that the worst was behind them. They could not have been more wrong.

July 1999 and the Present

If the radiance of a thousand suns were to burst at once into the sky, that would be like the splendor of the Mighty One... I am become Death, Shatterer of Worlds.

— J. Robert Oppenheimer, quoting the *Bhagavad Gita* after witnessing the A-bomb test at Los Alamos

Note: This section contains some sensitive Storyteller only information and may not be appropriate for players beginning a **Denizens** campaign. Last year's **Time of Thin Blood** covers this information in far more detail. Denizens and changelings alike know little of these events as yet, but Storytellers may wish to read that book for further insight.

If the doors opened a crack during the Resurgence, events among the prodigals slammed them all the way open in the summer of 1999. One of the oldest Children of Lilith, a creature known to some fae as "Ravana," awoke near India and began to call his children to his side. The psychic emanations of its awakening rippled out across the world, causing nightmares for its descendants, changelings and human sensitives alike. Other prodigals moved against this creature of the Elder-Dark in a desperate attempt to prevent it from regaining the fullness of its power. The fury of their attacks and the

ensuing battle threatened to rip apart the veil of secrecy hiding the supernatural from humanity. Wielding powers of a secret origin, the creature and its brood conjured "illusions," some harmless, some deadly, from thin air. The Hidden Ones, despairing of a subtle solution, used their greatest weapon, a technological/spiritual "bomb" of devastating proportions. Even this did not stop the creature, however, though it laid waste to the spirit realm in every direction and caused the horrible death of a million innocent human souls. At the last, however, the light of the rising sun, reflected on the vampire by technological magic, reduced it to ash. The danger ended, the victors undertook the task of damage control, blaming the human deaths on a typhoon that raged around the battle site. On the surface, the battle seemed to be one of blood against steel, few ever associated the danger with something as ephemeral as dreams.

In the dim recesses of history, before the two realms divided, Ravana the Wanderer was a guest of the early Unseelie Court. Ancient and powerful pacts were woven between the fae and their guest, giving him and his brood the ability to call extrusions of the Dreaming into the Autumn World. Ravana's death loosed the full force of the Dreaming contained within the now-broken pacts. Combined with the circumstances of his destruction (and the thousands of humans who died with him), the cataclysm wrought explosive results in the Dreaming, opening long sealed trods into the dark dream realms and

shredding the nearby Silver Path like tissue. A vast storm of ancient blood and darkling spirits cascaded through the Dreaming, affecting even the most distant realms. The naraka and the acheri were at ground zero for these events. Many died in the ensuing holocaust; others were forever changed by the spirit energies released and were among the first to enter the Autumn Realms.

Now long banished adheene are free to walk again in the waking world. The first hoarfrost of Endless Winter has frozen the ground and the scent of snow is heavy in the air. Humanity lies before the returning fae in all its neon splendor. New dreams full of terror and magnificence travel at the speed of thought through the Internet or the ether. Fresh insights and modern nightmares beckon the returning Denizens, who arrived first in a trickle but now in a growing stream. Some have returned to fulfill old pacts of revenge, some are merely curious about the changes that occurred in their absence; still others fulfill murderous missions for unknown agencies. Far from forestalling the coming Apocalypse, the Hidden Ones may have hastened it. A cautionary tale, perhaps, for those who cavalierly tamper with the spirit realms.

At last the old darks return and many believe that the Denizens who appear at their forefront are the first harbingers of Final Winter. Are they avatars of Apocalypse or secret vassals of hope? This is the riddle and the story of the Dark-kin.





CHAPTER TWO: THE WINDS OF CHANGE

Half chant, half animal-howl, the ragged voice was razor-edged with pain.

"I bring you the heart of a Son of Adam, treacherous enemy of the Mother. I choked his soul with foxglove and ergot and wormwood. Accept my sacrifice and hear my loss."

The chanting form who prostrated herself before the great, rotting tree was neither woman nor animal, but the grieving spirit of both, a *fuath*, herder of cattle, guardian of the Winterweir and implacable force of avenging nature. Never more so than now, when one of her own lay dead.

Eyes limned red with madness and hot tears, she conjured the cruelest spirits of the forest, darkling powers of the Forest of Lies. Once she fought them, now she welcomed them.

"By the old Pact of Samhain-Ostara I beg of you a boon. Give me strength and cunning to strike down my foes. Cloud their eyes with terror and let them know my loss. Oh, Ardat Lili, Old-Dark-Willow-Mother, avenge me of my sister-wife's loss."

The forest held its breath, then all around her the fog began to move, though there was not the faintest hint of wind. White, osseous figures with eyes that glowed icy-blue caressed her, whispering promises of blood and murder and revenge.

Denizens and Their Environs

The Dreaming goes on forever. There is only one road, one forest, one chain of mountains and one sea. If you dream of trees, they become part of the Great Forest which, over billions of acres, encompasses every tree, deepest jungle, enchanted cloud forest or wooded lot. The conceits of geography mean little in the Dream Realms, which have few permanent places of reference. Nevertheless there are a few landmarks which stay more-or-less constant against the *Firchlís*. Some of the locations mentioned below are covered at length in **Dreams and Nightmares**. Things change, however, and in the brief time that has passed since the twilight roads reopened, certain places have altered considerably. Additionally, this chapter covers some hitherto undisclosed realms — off the Silver Path as it were — most commonly frequented by the Denizens. Finally, this section

details some of the methods by which the Denizens enter the Autumn Realms.

The Tenebrous Realms

Not defined by any map or borders, the Tenebrous Realms is a catchall term used by changelings to define the poorly understood realms off the Silver Path. To all but the most adventurous changelings, these places are considered dark, alien and dangerous. To the adhenes who live there, they are simply — home.

Perhaps the most telling fact about the Denizens' relationship to the Dreaming is that few of them call it that. Many see the Dream Realms as the only true reality and the human world as but one more realm (albeit an interesting one) if they think of it at all. This sanguine view of the human realms often evaporates once the Denizen has walked its Banality-riddled streets. The human realms hold a strong "moth to the flame" lure for the adhenes. Because of the Augmen, Denizens become less powerful as they enter the waking world (see Chapter 5). Those Denizens in-the-know call the Dreaming the spirit world, acknowledging in some way that they are projections or "dreams" of another realm. But the sheer horror experienced by those who discover that they are merely the product of someone else's dreams, albeit sentient ones, drives some Denizens to madness or death. The waking world may be a pretty bauble, tempting to possess, but it can also burn.

On Trods

More than mere roads, trods are the arteries through which the Dreaming's energy flows. This section gives a brief description of several types of dream roads and their relationship to the Denizens.

Twilight Roads

The fae refer to those unknown trods not protected by the Silver Path as the "Twilight Roads." Because the Earthward fae were victorious in the War of Trees, most trods leading to the waking realms are so protected; entrances usable by the Denizens are rare. Though Ravana's death re-opened many old paths, these are a distinct minority in the Near Dreaming. Twilight Roads increase exponentially in the deeper realms. Many of the Twilight Roads are one way, like the Paths of Balor. Denizens who follow them into the waking realm have a

hard time returning unless they can find a non-silvered route back out. Many of the Denizens who enter the waking world thus become trapped. Most Twilight Roads can be traveled by anyone; thus changelings may travel these trods (if they can find them) but do not enjoy the benefits of the Silver Path. Few of these paths are well mapped by Kithain and many are a mystery even to the Denizens. To changelings such trods are dark, dangerous and best used with caution — if at all.

The Paths of Balor

Many Dark-kin use specific trods, known as the Paths of Balor, ancient roads that pre-date even the Silver Path. Some of these roads may lead anywhere in the Dreaming or beyond. Their use has its limits and the dangers in traveling them are great. Because the Paths of Balor are all one way, traveling a road to its destination contains no guarantee of a safe return. House Balor knows the entrances and exits to many of these paths though, contrary to their assertions, they do not rule over them. They do often control the ends of these trods in the Near Dreaming (most frequently the Green Paths), and have set up patrols nearby. Any Denizen who comes through these guarded trods must negotiate with House Balor if they wish to pass. There are three known types of trod in this category: Black, Green and Gold.

Black: The Black Paths of Balor lead to the Shadowlands, those realms inhabited by the human dead. Infrequently used by most fae, they are sometimes traveled by sluagh and the bean sidhe. The enigmatic keremet use them to ferry human souls exchanged for the sidhe when the latter take human bodies. Black paths wind throughout the entirety of the Dreaming and boast outlets in the Autumn Realms.

Green: These served as the fomorians' supply roads during the Tessarakonta. They travel to many points in the Near and Far Dreaming, also leading to the middle-realm of werewolves and other spirits. Almost all Denizens are familiar with the Green Paths that surround their home realms. Though possible for a changeling to walk these paths, the dangers involved make it a foolhardy undertaking. Of all the changelings, redcaps, eshu and House Balor sidhe are the most frequent users.

Gold: The rarest of the three, the Gold Paths of Balor usually only start in the Deep Dreaming and lead to the realms of gods and legends. Few Denizens or changelings

of any sort use these trods, though there are a select few which the moiræ use to reach the Oneiric Kingdom of Dán.

The Silver Path

Built to protect their forces during the War of Trees, the Silver Path shelters changelings and other allied fae from the depredations of their old foes. Most Denizens may not travel trods protected by the Silver Ban. Those who try lose a point of Glamour per turn and, once out of Glamour, they lose Health Levels. Additionally, Denizens must spend extra Glamour to attack those on the protected path. A major disadvantage to the Dark-kin, the Silver Path restricts their freedom of movement and causes no little bitterness toward the changelings. There are, however, several notable exceptions to this rule: The two Denizen adhene that remained neutral throughout the war (the moiræ and the keremet) may walk these paths without penalty. There are certain rare Treasures that allow non-aligned fae to walk the path. The fourth level of the Art: Autumn Way (Dagda's Boon) allows Denizens to walk the path without harm. Finally, a changeling or other old ally of the Tuatha dé Danaan may temporarily invite the Denizen onto the path by spending a point of Glamour. This invitation only holds for one trod and ends as soon as the Denizen leaves the path.

The Near Dreaming

The Near Dreaming has undergone great changes over the centuries, reflecting alterations in the Autumn World. Mostly contiguous with the waking world, the Near Dreaming roughly mirrors it in such peculiarities as geography, culture, Glamour and Banality. Denizens who live here have had a window into the realm's ongoing metamorphosis—for better and for worse. Most upsetting to the area's Denizens have been the changes occurring in the short time since the Resurgence. Banished from the mortal realms during the War of Trees, the Denizens who settled here were at least able to console themselves with the fact that they dominated much of the Near Dreaming. After the Shattering, most fae either fled to Arcadia or remained trapped in the Autumn World. Taking advantage of the confusion and the weakening of the Silver Path, Denizens exacted fearsome retribution upon the remaining fae homesteads, herding them into small enclaves. During the Resurgence, returning sidhe again broadened the Silver Path. Many

changelings, refugees from Banality, took up residence in the Near Dreaming and sought to expand their influence, resulting in new hostilities between the old foes. At first the returning changelings took full advantage of the fact that they alone could travel into the Autumn Realms, launching raids on Denizen territories, then retreating to "safety" in the waking world. With the recent reopening of the Twilight Paths, however, the field has leveled considerably.

The Meridianus

Denizens who make the journey to the Autumn World quickly discover that reaching Earth is far easier than turning back. Earth exerts a dark and heavy psychic undertow which the ephemeral Dark-kin have a difficult time escaping. This "undertow" manifests itself in several ways. Most important of these is a region of the Near Dreaming that exists just beyond the Mists. Called the *Meridianus*, this region is an ancient defense left by the Tuatha dé Danaan to help enforce their Silver Ban. A realm of howling storms and little substance, it is almost impossible to navigate and is haunted by dangerous chimera. Called dream-shadows, these black shadowy masses attack any visiting Dark-kin, dissolving their chimerical substance. Denizens only encounter this strange aspect of the region on the way *out* of the waking world, not upon entering it. The reasons for this remain obscure, though several theories abound. One states that it was created to cut-off the escape of a great fomorian army during the Tesseract, forcing them to fight "with their backs to the sea." Another, more popular, explanation states that the Tuatha dé Danaan prophesied that having some Denizens trapped on Earth would be useful in the ages to come. In any event, this barrier exists for the Denizens until they acquire two points of permanent Banality after which it disappears as though it never existed.

The Mists

Occupying the borderland betwixt dream and waking, the Mists were traditionally seen as little more than a place of transition. Entering the Dreaming a changeling might shed her human cares here, opening herself to the wonders of the Dreaming. For those passing from the Dreaming into the waking world, it is a place where the Bedlam of the Dreaming ends and a changeling's human side may again become grounded in reality. Lately, it has become a place of dark, furtive movement. Few changelings, even those of the Unseelie Court, would take advantage of the Mists' confusion to attack their fellow Kithain. Most Denizens feel no such restraint. Here dark chimera and Denizens attempt to confuse or lure changelings from the safety of the Silver Path. It was in the Mists where the last great assault against the sidhe occurred during their exodus from the Dreaming in 1969. Since then, certain Denizens (usually opportunistic bandits) gather here, hoping to use the mnemonic Mists' amnesia inducing qualities to cover their assaults or to watch the waking world. Despite the advantages they previously enjoyed, Denizens are no more immune to the Mists than are changelings. Recent security along the Silver Path has improved and all but the most naive changelings are aware of the dangers there.

Fields Before

A traditional changeling stronghold, the Fieldlings weathered attacks by Thallain, wicked chimera and Denizens alike. A place of relative safety, the Fields Before were both strengthened and weakened by the influx of changelings after the Resurgence. Most commonly inhabited by pooka, boggans and other sociable changelings, the Fields Before have long been considered among the most "civilized" realms in the Near Dreaming. Things have changed considerably since the opening of the Twilight Paths. A week of fiery storms passed through the region, wreaking havoc upon its residents' simple way of life. Fire, black tar-like water and strange chimera rained down from the sky, poisoning crops and sowing fear and dissension. These were followed by news of savage attacks from abroad. Outlying homesteads in the Fields Behind (in the adjoining Far Dreaming) have played host to gruesome massacres as redcaps, emboldened dark-chimera and even worse creatures attacked from

the Bullydale Wastes and beyond. Now, in many parts of the Fields, changelings and other civil chimera board up their windows and doors at night. Once welcoming strangers with open arms and fulsome hospitality, many here have become suspicious or downright hostile.

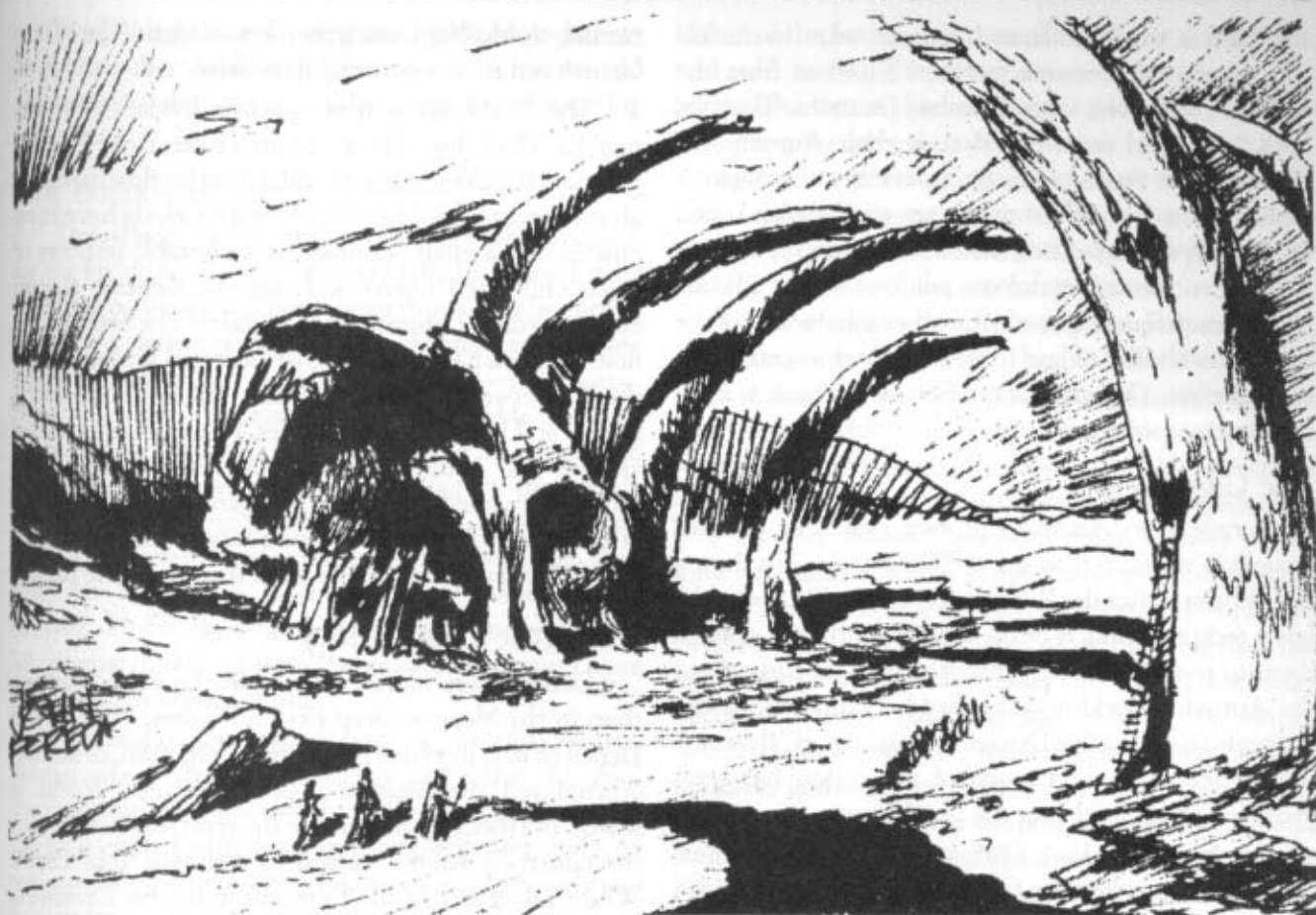
Mahâraurava

Can any soul survive the searing fireball of an atomic blast? If human and animal souls are seen as electromagnetic force fields, such fields could be totally disrupted by a nuclear explosion... This is precisely the ultrasecret and supersensitive function of the atom bomb: a Soul Killer, to alleviate an escalating soul glut.

— William S. Burroughs, "Soul Killer"

Greatest victim of Ravana's death, the naraka home realm's former beauty has forever disappeared. Situated in a Near Dreaming realm which corresponds to North-western India, Mahâraurava was at ground zero when the Hidden Ones deployed their spirit-bomb. Few other creatures have ever visited this realm with the possible exception of the acheri. Changeling legends claim the region was once the most beautiful and cruel of realms, consisting of great jeweled mountains where even the smallest stone was worth a duke's ransom. The naraka, part of a faerie race called the Asuras, lived in civilized, if cruel, splendor, residing in vast palaces carved into the gleaming mountains, lolling in their fruited gardens, perfecting the arts of music, love-making and pain. It was their job—so say the legends—to punish wicked human souls, boiling them in the region's rivers of molten copper.

Mahâraurava now hosts a dark, blasted wasteland. The Samvarta or Doomsday Cloud vents its fiery, ash-laden anger upon the land. Hung heavy with fragmented parosemes and solimonds, it vomits forth lightning, black rain and tar-like hail stones. A great red and black fiery vortex has appeared in the sky, and seeks to gather the entire realm into its great mouth. Some say it leads to a realm called the Lemniscate. At night the vortex turns blue and great spider-like phantoms ride the howling air-trods which surround it, attacking those foolish enough to be outdoors, dragging their screaming victims to an unknown fate. The molten rivers, once reflecting a golden mirrored sheen, now choke with blackened ash. The jeweled mountains are twisted spires of blackened slag. Pieces of the realm's former beauty appear here or



there, but Mahâraurava is a dead land. Some naraka, driven insane by pain and their lost memories, still haunt the ruins. Most prominent of these is Udri, a king of the Southlands who still lives in a castle of jeweled slag and sacrifices trespassers to the Samvarta, which he believes to be a god. Other naraka fled through fiery portals to the far corners of the Dreaming, bringing death and destruction in their maddened pain. Some of these have found places among mercenary armies on the Red Plains while others, less mad, seek out their lost origins. Of those who now haunt the waking world, some seek a way to recreate their citadels of beauty and pleasure while others single-mindedly pursue rumors of those who destroyed their home.

The Blotkeldur

The nomadic acheri have never had a home realm, but if they did, some say the Blotkeldur would suit them. Cold, wet and dismal, the Blotkeldur is an endless morass of poisoned marshes, shallow meandering rivers and sickly scrub. Deep in the darkest regions of the realm are vast, cyclopean cities built from the denuded ivory bones of behemoths long extinct in all but the deepest Dreaming. The meeting place for the White Court before the

Tessarakonta, their followers still gather here, hoping to curry favor with the pale gods by sacrificing humans and fae alike. During the War of Trees a great changeling army drove the fomorians and their followers from the lands, but not before an entire army was slain.

Many believe that the shades of both the sacrifices and the fallen armies haunt the land. Jealous of the living, they seek to steal their warmth and draw them below the fetid waters. Despite the realm's inherent hostility, there are those who wish to possess its secrets. The Acheron fir-bholg and the fuaths from the bordering forests both claim preeminence over the realm, and many of both races have died here over the centuries. As recently as the Resurgence two great war parties tracked each other through the swamp. Neither one was ever heard from again. Recent rumors whisper that the White Court has returned to their old fastness and again gather their forces.

The Middlemarch

Foothills to the great Splintered Mountains, the arid stonelands of the Middlemarch constitute some of the harshest realms in the Near Dreaming. Its most infamous

inhabitants, the Middlemarch redcaps, were on the losing side in the Tessarakonta and banished from the waking world along with the other Denizens. They are both larger and more brutal than their Autumnland cousins. The Acheron fir-bholg occupy the region's higher strata. Known for their extreme decadence and surprisingly subtle politics, their cities are darkly opulent mazes of enchanted crystal and precious stones. The fir-bholg most frequently battle the other inhabitants of the Middlemarch, but of late have allied with several local redcap tribes. Their king, Ezag-Son-of-Eochaid, is a potent, ancient sorcerer.

The Wyldweir

Formerly an Arcadian protectorate, this forested mountain region fell to several Denizen groups during the Miririm. After the Resurgence, House Eiluned ruthlessly reclaimed much of its ancient lands and opened them to re-settlement by disaffected changelings from the Autumn World and the Fields Behind. Both the changelings and native Denizens claim historical ownership of the realm and much of the region has been drenched with blood over the last 30 years.

Among the region's Dark-kin are the Black Forest fir-bholg (also called the Corca-Duibhe) and a divided fuath nation. The Corca-Duibhe are shorter, squatter and more primitive than the beast-men of the Splinterpeaks in the Far Dreaming. Wiser in the ways of nature, they have almost completely forgotten the use of their ancient machinery which lies in disrepair in the surrounding forest caves. Insular and suspicious, they are numerous and wage a war of attrition against the local fuaths. Oddly, despite their savagery, the Corca-Duibhe practice a form of participatory democracy among themselves. As in the Winterweir, some of the local fuaths have thrown in their lot with the distant White Court while the independent "Forcene Confederacy" maintains a fierce freedom. War between the fir-bholg and the fuaths weakened both sides to the point where they could not repulse House Eiluned's return. Current adhene resistance to the changeling occupation consists mainly of murderous raids and terrorist actions. It is whispered by some that the Corca-Duibhe have entered into an alliance with the White Court in order to gain vengeance on the invading changelings. Some among the Forcene Confederacy, however, have made overtures to the re-

turning changelings, using their knowledge of the White Court's return as a powerful persuasive tool.

The Wyldweir is now roughly divided into four regions. The Eiluned Protectorate's ruler, Duke Egan, is paranoid but calculating. He rules from his floating castle above a great lake. The Black Forest fir-bholg have been pushed into a small but nearly impenetrable territory of thick uncharted forests and rugged mountain terrain bordering on the Splintered Mountains. The two warring fuath nations battle over the wet forested lowlands near the Winterweir. The final territory, the Suräli Country, is hilly and largely devoid of trees. Its inhabitants are an ancient and primitive Denizen adhene of gargantuan hill-giants called the obda. Dangerous but none-too-bright, they hold an ancient animosity toward the neighboring Denizens who have forced them into the hills.

The Far Dreaming

Denizens are more common in the Far Dreaming than in the Near or Deep Dream Realms. Most of the Denizens who live here have largely forgotten, or at least downplayed, the importance of the Autumn World. It was quite a shock to many when the great storms that tore through their realms seemed to emanate from Earth. While few, if any, of the Denizens in the Far Dreaming know exactly what happened, recent events have forced them to look away from their old agendas and once again consider the human lands.

Fields Behind

Formerly civilized, in less than a year things have changed considerably in the Fields Behind. Bandits travel through the countryside. Formerly benign chimera have taken an ugly turn. Large raiding parties from the Bullydales have slaughtered entire towns, casting a dark pall over the land. Unable to control the growing chaos, some towns look to vigilante mobs to maintain order. Traditionally commoner in governance, some desperate communities have even turned to the sidhe for help. It isn't strange to spot Red Branch or Balor knights or Scathach abroad in the land. The region's strangest defender is Anasta-dal, a "Seelie-minded" female fir-bholg knight. Although viewed with suspicion, she is known to have saved several Fieldling towns from certain destruction. Rumors of gathering armies in the Bullydales and of movements in the dark forests beyond mean that few can genuinely complain of her protection.

Few Denizens are welcome in the Fields. Most changelings remember the War of Trees, at least in legend, and are suspicious of those not in the recognized changeling fraternity.

The Bullydales

The swampy Bullydales have always been a problem for the Fieldlings. Long relegated to the badlands, forced to subsist on lichen and unpleasant things that live under logs, the creatures of the Bullydale Wastes have become heartened by recent developments. Formerly disorganized and forced to come up the few navigable trods not protected by the Silver Path, the clumsy raids mounted from the Bullydales were easily routed by the keenly aimed arrows of the Fieldlings. Only the local redcap population constituted an intelligent threat, but they were few in number. Now long-sealed trods have reopened. Fir-bholg, swamp drudes and the voracious Middlemarch redcaps from the mountains beyond have rekindled the flames of old.

New leaders have sprung up among the wastelanders. Names like Neerak the Butcher and Olfar the Foul (representatives of the redcap and fir-bholg respectively) are now uttered with dread in the neighboring civilized regions. The Bedlam-bound sidhe queen, Lenoora Ailil now hosts an army of strange guests. These "naraka" use her lands to launch attacks on the Fieldlings and the Splintered fiefs of the fir-bholg alike, pursuing a rumored alliance with Harroth the Mute.

Quox & Mux

Also called the Low Dukedoms, these animal kingdoms have always maintained a precarious position in the Dreaming. Before the War of Trees much of this realm was under the heel of the fomorians who used the animals for food or brute labor, despite their obvious sentience. The servants of the Red Court have not forgotten and in the past year the animal dukedoms have suffered assaults from abroad. The majority of the attackers have been fir-bholg from the Splintered Mountains or naraka. Parts of Mux and much of Quox are in flames, and many of its lighthearted people have been slaughtered without mercy or forced into bondage.

The Winterweir

Situated in the Winter portion of the Forest of Lies along a Nearward tributary of the Sea of Silver, the Winterweir is a cool, misty place shrouded in mystery.

Home of the fuaths, few parts of the Forest are as thick and wild as the Winterweir — or as dangerous. The fuaths who live in this realm are suspicious of strangers and generally drive them away unless properly propitiated. Some do this merely to ensure their solitude while others are actively malevolent. The former have good cause for suspicion, especially given recent fir-bholg raids and the activities of the second category.

Lately winter has been bitter indeed. First to awaken and youngest of the fomorian houses, after thousands of years of slumber, the White Court is on the move. Once imprisoned in the hearts of the forests' silver oaks, the old whisperers at the heart of the Forest of Lies now spin a new brand of waking terror throughout the woods. Several tribes of fuaths have been quick to rally to the fomorian banner, seeing in them an opportunity to gain power, protection and revenge; though they have had to swallow working with similarly allied fir-bholg from the Wyldweir (a bitter but necessary evil). The Frost Court occupies a frozen palace at the heart of the forest's Winterlands. Ruling over these, Lir, offspring of a fuath sorceress and a powerful fomorian lord, sends legates throughout the Dreaming and now to the Autumn World to spy and make alliances. Those who oppose Lir in the Winterweir are mostly a loose-knit confederation of independent fuath tribes and Seelie trolls from the distant Kyber Pass. Fighting a losing battle, they too have sent out messengers to gain aid against the Frost Queen.

Besides the fuaths and fomorians, other creatures inhabit the forest. Among the forest's most dangerous inhabitants are the morozko (frost servants and minor functionaries of the White Court), vicious packs of feral wolf-pooka and the Ke'let (a monstrous invisible hunter who strangles or freezes his victims, hanging their corpses from the trees). Most disturbingly, the Aslynthi, spider-like generals of the White Court, have returned.

Kureksarra and the Splintered Mountains

In stark contrast to the silent Winterweir, the Splintered Mountains and Kureksarra Planes are cacophonous, even deafening. Claps of thunder peal ceaselessly throughout the realm, creating a backdrop for myriad other sounds: the clash of sword on armor, the hooves of clattering war-beasts and the screams of the dying in Kureksarra's endless war. The great whirling, grinding machines of the fir-bholg — many without any known

purpose — add to the din. Underlying all this is a dark and sonorous dirge, audible only to the unconscious ear, which has grown ever more dire in the last year. It is the siren call of war. The second key, that which awakens the Red Court of the fomorians, has just been turned. And while it is unlikely that the court as a whole has arisen, the Crystal Circle and other such luminaries believe that at least one of its members, Phlogiston the Jester, is once again abroad.

For centuries Five Great Beasts have battled for the prize promised by the Red King before his death. The five immortal generals' names read like a litany of the great lords of antiquity: Tamur the Unexpected of House Gwydion, Sir Bolsan of House Dougal, Kosa the Bull (troll champion of the Tessarakonta), Harroth the Mute of House Balor and Lady Allesande the Fair of the Fiona. And, indeed, it is instructive that none of the Red Courts' original followers are among the wars' primary combatants (though the fir-bholg are certainly an interested party). The key to the Triumph Casque of Sorrows (shattered into nine pieces by the Red Fomorian king has been the coveted prize since the War of Trees. Some of the combatants originally desired the casque for good purposes, but now all that matters is the fighting and the dying. More or less equal, the Five Great Beasts have been evenly matched for centuries, but as with so many other certainties in the last year, things have changed.

A temple of moiræ in the Splinterpeaks, renowned as healers and oracles, holds the casque itself. Exempt from the war by ancient treaty, their Grecian-style mountainside temple is neutral ground and sometimes used for meetings between the warring parties. The moiræ here will only surrender the casque to the one who holds the complete key. Despite this potentially cataclysmic trust, they are generally "Seelie" in comportment and gracious hostesses, lending advice and sanctuary to those in need.

The fir-bholg have had soldiers on every side of the combat, leading some to cynically conclude that, no matter who wins, the beast-kings plan to come out on top. While most of them have a brutish edge, they pursue varying philosophies and life-ambitions. Some are violent and brutal to extremes — murderers, rapists and torturers. Others merely wish to ensure their own security and pursue the natural freedom that is their animal birthright. In the great Kureksarra war, fir-bholg have served both marginally Seelie causes and made alliances with the worst of the region's cannibal redcaps. Cur-

rently the best known clans extant in the Splintered Mountains are the Silver River fir-bholg (also called the Corca-Oidce) who retain a rough independence in alliance with several thunder giants, and the Dark Vale fir-bholg who serve Harroth Balor. Of the Five Great Beasts it is a curious development that Harroth has recently retired from the field, leaving the battle to Ichthus, a competent if uninspired fir-bholg chieftain of the Dark Vale. Whispered rumors have it that Harroth now furthers the Red Court's fell designs in the Autumn World.

The Deep Dreaming

Not many of the Denizens listed in this book dare the mind rending depths of the Deep Dreaming. Nevertheless, there are some notable exceptions.

The Oneiric Realms

In a world without constant borders, there are two hypothetical lines by which some dream cartographers measure the extent of the Known Dreaming: the Axle and the Equinoctial. The first measures the Dreaming from top to bottom. The second traverses the Dreaming's horizontal median, acting as a rough equator. As with any such measurements in the Dreaming, this is largely an intellectual conceit designed to give some sense of order to an otherwise chaotic universe. At the top of this fictitious Axle lies the Kingdom of Dán. Besides this there are nine other minor Oneiric Realms (Hypnates, Moros and Hemera, Aether and Ker, Charis and Momus, Diké and Protea) and three major ones (Arcadia, Night and Silence).

The Kingdom of Dán

Among the most famous and mysterious of the minor Oneiric Realms, the Kingdom of Dán is home to the enigmatic threefold goddess/conceptual entities known as the Fates. Also called the Norns, the Sisters Three are most commonly portrayed as a triad of women who appear as maiden, mother and hag. While this triad has appeared numerous times in the past, they have rarely been seen in the last few centuries — until now. Avatars and messengers of the three Fates, the moiræ become an increasingly common sight as the world continues its inexorable plummet toward Winter. As with the Norns themselves, the moiræ are difficult to fathom at the best of times and given to speaking in riddles.

The kingdom is virtually impossible for any besides Fate's appointed servants to reach (though many have

tried). On a great island somewhere in the Silver Sea, the kingdom is surrounded first by a vast and trackless desert, then by a ring of impenetrable mountains and finally by a great river of inky darkness. The kingdom itself is reportedly a sort of paradise, reflecting the best aspects of both the Seelie and Unseelie Courts. Bountiful farms, wild forests, crystalline alpine lakes and proud towers play host to the favored children of Fate — the great heroes, sages and poets who find their way here after they have served their purpose in the greater world. King Thelat, a just and wise ruler, confers with the Fates on a regular basis. (Even most moiræ cannot claim this honor.) Although most believe him to be an ancient sidhe lord, there are some that believe he is of an even older genesis.

If the realm itself is a paradise, the same cannot always be said of the pronouncements of the goddesses who oversee it. Fate can be cruel as well as kind and those who seek the wisdom of the Prophetic Sisters must pay a heavy price. In times past even the gods had to humble themselves to sample Fate's wisdom. At the kingdom's center stands the Axle Tree, also called Yggdrasil or the World Tree. Towering hundreds of miles into the air, none may reach its top, which stretches into the celestial realms. Surrounded by a river known as the Well of Inspiration and Wisdom, the tree's roots are guarded by Mimir, a fearsome and immortal water demon, and a panoply of monsters and other spirits; none can reach the tree's roots unless permitted by Fate. Near the river is a temple of the Three Fates. Those who wish to speak with the Norns, to sample the fruits of the tree or the waters of inspiration must spend a night in the temple. Attended by moiræ the sleeping visitor must plead her case in a startling and dangerous dream. She who succeeds in convincing the Norns of her cause has a choice: The favored one may either meet with the Sisters Three, drink from the Well of Inspiration or be ferried across the river by Mimir to visit the World Tree. In extremely rare instances the Storyteller may choose to let the visitor do all three. The favored visitor must make a major sacrifice to propitiate the Norns. Odin, it is said, surrendered his eye to drink from the waters of inspiration.

The Norns themselves are awe-inspiring, beautiful and terrible. Every word they utter hangs heavy with portent and hidden meaning. They may answer any question and will do so truthfully, though it may take an army of seers to unravel their true meaning. A frequent question for the Fates has to do with the true location of

Arcadia and their answer has sent supplicants to every end of the Dreaming. Those who choose to drink from the Well of Inspiration and Wisdom acquire the gift of insight, permanently raising their Soothsay Art by one level (maximum of 5) and, additionally, gaining the Birthrights of the moiræ for a year's time. Finally, those who visit the tree may either pluck a fruit from its lowest branches (a mere several kilometers in the air) or pick up one of the strange crystalline shards among the tree's roots. The first contains a single memory from a great luminary of the Dreaming and may offer the eater incalculable benefits. The crystals at the tree's roots, sometimes called ana-klaven, may be the blood of a great god or merely sap from the tree. They are frozen shards of time itself and highly sought by those invested with such magic, though few have ever unraveled the true extent of their energies.

The Autumn World

From the lofty heights of the Deep Dreaming, banishment to the Autumn World may seem a dark fate indeed. Nonetheless, the adhenes' lore keepers understand that the waking world contains the source of all they see as reality. While a Denizen may be far more powerful in the high branches of the Far Dreaming, the roots of the tree hold the true source of their power. The Denizens' greatest luminaries acknowledge the waking world as those roots. Many Dark-kin recognize that, in order to triumph over their enemies, they must master the world of men. Unfortunately for the Denizens, the Autumn World is guarded by fae who have wrapped themselves in human flesh and who call themselves "changelings." Entering — and leaving — can be difficult since changelings heavily populate the Near Dreaming and still tell dark stories of the Denizens who served the fomorians in the War of Trees. Denizens in some parts of Autumn and the Near Dreaming may be killed on sight.

Now that the Twilight Paths are open again, entering the Autumn World is possible for the Dark-kin. Most of the adhenes who enter the waking world do so by the Green Paths of Balor. Denizens may also enter freely through raths or trods (provided the Silver Path does not protect them). Opening a trod or a freehold rath is no more difficult for a Denizen with the appropriate Art or Realm than for any changeling, but the similarities end

there. As many Denizens are quick to realize, surviving the Autumn World is the tricky part.

Entering the Autumn World

Denizens are not creatures of this world, a fact brought home to them in the troubles they encounter when first trying to manifest themselves here. Numerous ways exist for the Dark-kin to enter the waking world—at least now that Ravana's death has thrown the door open. They're creatures of the shadows; it's difficult to notice them most of the time. Like changelings, once in the real world adheene must take on a physical shell to further their ends, but theirs is usually a less permanent arrangement than it is for the changelings, and Denizens are more susceptible to Banality. There are several ways in which a Denizen may interact with the waking world. By far the safest and most utilitarian methods involve the Arts and Merits detailed in Chapter Four. A Denizen without these abilities may still manifest in the Autumn World to a certain extent, but as with all things free, you get what you pay for. Below are the three most popular methods (aside from the use of the Autumn Way Art) used by Dark-kin to experience the waking world.

• Phantom Form

In the Dreaming, Denizens have solid substance, but in the waking world they are no more substantial than a fading dream. Without preparation, a Denizen's first experience with the world will likely be one without any physical existence. Fresh through the rath or trod, in this wraith-like form the Denizen must pit his permanent Glamour in a contested roll against the local Banality rating every 12 hours. Every time the roll goes against the Denizen, he gains one point of temporary Banality. If his temporary Banality reaches 10 he gains a permanent point. If the Denizen's permanent Banality exceeds his current Glamour he becomes Undone, forgetting his fae nature and wandering as a lost and pale phantom until he is rescued or stumbles across a source of Glamour. For obvious reasons it is difficult, if not impossible, for Denizens in this state to inspire Glamour in humans. Once his permanent Banality exceeds his permanent Glamour he simply ceases to exist. This form does have advantages: the Denizen may travel through physical obstacles and is virtually invisible to anyone without faerie sight. Nevertheless, most Denizens find that, at least until they learn their way around, the dangers inherent to this fragile form far outweigh the advantages. Denizens in this form are highly susceptible to being caught up in a human's

dreams (see Dream Traps, below). With Phantom Form the Denizen can use any of his Arts, and can call on any Treasures or chimerical weapons. However all such effects are purely chimerical with no bearing on the waking world, and the Denizen may neither Enchant humans nor call upon the Wyrð.

• Simple Possession

The most active method of interacting with the Autumn World without Arts, Simple Possession involves the active possession of a non-sleeping human. The waking human mind, however, is difficult for Denizens to fathom and control; possession remains a short-term proposition. Denizens who seek to take a human form must expend a point of Glamour and make a Willpower roll (difficulty equal to the target's Willpower or inherent Banality, whichever is higher). For each success the Denizen may occupy the target for one hour. The Denizen may automatically add to this amount of time by spending additional Glamour, each point buying an amount of time equal to the first. By using this method, the Denizen automatically gains a temporary point of Banality. The Denizen takes on the Physical Attributes and Appearance of the person he possesses while maintaining his own Mental Attributes, Charisma and Manipulation. This ability takes a full turn to activate and only works on unenlightened humans, not prodigals or humans possessing inherent magic.

Simple Possession confers no knowledge or skills from the possessed person's life, thus making it difficult to pull off a convincing masquerade against those who know the person well. This is especially true given most Denizens' ignorance of the waking world. Dark-kin may seek out healthy or attractive individuals in the hopes of maximizing this ability, but just because a person looks strong or healthy, doesn't mean that this is necessarily the case. With Simple Possession the Denizen can use any of his Arts, common voile or chimerical weapons, but cannot call upon any special Treasures. The Denizen may Enchant mortals while in this state but may not call upon the Wyrð. Possessed humans may remember their actions while under this power (refer to the Mists Chart in *Changeling: the Dreaming*) and have a vague notion of an alien presence.

• Somnambulism

A popular method by which Denizens may manifest themselves in the Autumn World, this form of possession

has several advantages and one major drawback. While sleeping, a person's guard is down. During the REM Stage a Denizen may slip into the person's consciousness. In other sleep stages, or if the target is awake, the Denizen must use either the Autumn Way Art or Simple Possession. With Somnambulism the Denizen must spend a point of Glamour and make a contested Glamour roll against the sleeper's current Banality. If the Denizen scores even one success, she takes control of the person's body. During REM sleep the neurons in the brain stem usually disconnect much of the sleeper's muscular apparatus, effectively paralyzing the dreamer. Able to circumvent this to some degree, the Denizen is able to open the sleeper's eyes, make him walk, talk and *appear* awake, though in a daze. In this state the person's movements are languid and not fully coordinated. This also affects the Denizen, who feels mentally sluggish.

The same Attribute distribution as for Simple Possession holds, but all Attributes are at -1 to their dice pool. The Denizen may keep control of the person as long as she can keep him asleep, which is usually the natural duration of the person's sleeping cycle. Loud noises, bright lights and violent actions may awaken the person (the Denizen may keep the person asleep through such an episode by spending more Glamour and repeating her initial roll). This ability only works on normal humans, not on prodigals or mages. Unlike Simple Possession, the Denizen may glean fragmented information about the sleeper through his dreams. The main advantage of this form of possession is that the Denizen gains no additional Banality from this experience. Since the Denizen is joining the sleeper in his dream-like state, she is particularly susceptible to Dream Traps (see below) in this condition. Furthermore, a Denizen practicing Somnambulism may also find her tertiary Ariá attempting to change personality. Lastly, because the human is, in effect, Enchanted, he and the Denizen are both vulnerable to chimerical damage in this form. Any damage done to the human form is also transferred to the Denizen's body once she returns to it, though Wyrd or physical damage done to the host only manifests as chimerical damage to the Denizen. With Somnambulism the Denizen can use any of his Arts, chimerical weapons and even Treasures since she is closer to the Dreaming than when

A Note on Switching

Obviously, there exists a danger that some less scrupulous players may abuse these abilities, transferring from body to body in an attempt to cause havoc and avoid detection. While it is technically possible to do just that, changing from one to another should be a costly maneuver. Aside from the Glamour expenditure involved, those who switch bodies more often than once per day should gain some sort of derangement for the personality fragmentation it causes. Each time the Denizen indulges in this practice, she should gain a new derangement or deepen her old one. Quite soon, such a being becomes far too unstable to be used as a player character and the Storyteller should take it away to become an Storyteller character. Of course, it's your game. If you have no problem with body-jumping, *c'est la vie!* Still, if the characters can do it, so can their foes....

using Simple Possession. She may also Enchant others, but may not call upon the Wyrd

The Evanescent

Not all Denizens left Earth after the War of Trees. Some individuals stayed behind, sheltered in hidden enclaves throughout the waking world. Few of these "Evanescent" fae (so named because of their tendency to disappear from one realm and into another) underwent the Changeling Way Ritual. Some stayed as spies or *agents provocateur* for the fomorians or for rulers among their own adhene. Many stayed because they enjoyed the Autumn World and its amenities, because they were trapped or because they were renegades, hiding from their fellow Denizens. While some were here since the Tesseractakonta, others appeared during eruptions of dark Glamour during the Miririm. These episodes (named

Tarrarom by the Æthernaut Doctor Tourette before his disappearance) occurred during periods of great upheaval on Earth. Like the moon launch that engendered the Resurgence in 1969, such occasions coincided with periods of intense emotion. Some of these were positive, but the Tarrarom most connected with the return of the Denizens were almost always periods of dark Glamour. Wars, plagues, inquisitions and genocide sometimes opened ways not protected by the Silver Path. Most such trods opened and closed without notice, but sometimes, opportunistic adhene entered into the Autumn World. None of these were as intense or all encompassing as that which occurred with the death of Ravana, however. The most common Denizens to appear during these periods were the acheri, aonides, keremet and moiræ. Through their experiences, Evanescents have greater knowledge of the world than newly arrived Denizens.

Bedlam and Banality

Among the first things a Denizen notices upon entering the Autumn World (besides its bizarre people and places) is the oppressive force called Banality. As true creatures of the Dreaming, Denizens do not begin with any inherent Banality. Without human bodies or prejudices, they are free of the ravages of the Autumn World and can sense the "Banal Shiver" inherent to the changeling mixed breeds. This has advantages and disadvantages. On the up side, Denizens are almost completely invulnerable to the madness of Bedlam. No Denizen ever suffers from Bedlam from staying too long in the Dreaming unless she becomes too enamored by human and changeling ways.

Unfortunately, this also means that, without the changelings' protective earthly bodies, Denizens are highly vulnerable to Banality once they enter the waking world. To a Denizen fresh from the Dreaming, even the most carefree changeling childling seems to carry a heavy load of Banality. Once trapped in the Autumn Realms, Denizens soon realize how truly vulnerable they are to its deadening psychic gravity. Also, since changelings currently control most of the freeholds, trods and raths in the Autumn World, it is difficult for newcomers to take a refreshing dip of Glamour whenever they wish.

Glamour is a rare commodity in the World of Darkness and the Kithain are understandably reluctant to share it with old enemies. This reticence has already led to bloody skirmishes when arriving Denizens have forced

the issue. In game terms, Denizens start off with no Banality. In fact, Denizens do have some small Banality at root (pure Glamour without Banality is nothing but chaotic, creative energy), but it is a negligible quantity. As they experience the waking world, however, they find that it is virtually impossible to avoid contact with Banality.

System: Although Denizens gain Banality faster than changelings (see Phantom Form and Simple Possession) they also dissipate it faster once back in the Dreaming. For every day a Denizen spends in the Dreaming, he loses one temporary point of Banality, up to 9 points. After that, the loss of Banality becomes a little slower, though it is not as protracted a process as it is for the Kithain (as detailed in **Dreams and Nightmares**). Each permanent point of Banality after the first takes at least a year before it begins to fade (after it falls below two the Denizen is again vulnerable to the Meridianus).

Glamour

Many Denizens are used to being "spoon-fed" Glamour in the Dreaming and initially may have problems seeking it in the waking world. Glamour gathered in the Dreaming, while easily procured and free of Banality, doesn't have the immediacy or freshness of dreams drawn or ripped directly from the Dreamer. Some Dark-kin become addicted to drawing directly from the source. The biggest problem Denizens face is that unclaimed freeholds are rare. Most must therefore depend on epiphany.

- **Rapture:** Denizens aren't split between the Dreaming and the Waking worlds like changelings and have less trouble achieving Rapture when creating. Once the Denizen creates his work, the player should roll the appropriate Attribute + Ability (difficulty equal to the character's Glamour subtracted from his Banality +5). Rapture may cause the Denizen to switch his Ariá (see Chapter Three).

- **Ravaging:** Most Denizens don't share the Seelie Court's objections to Ravaging, though psychic rape isn't universal among all adhene. The rolls for Ravaging are identical for both Denizens and Kithain.

- **Reaping:** Some Denizens draw Glamour from the dying. An extreme form of Ravaging, simple murder isn't enough to release these energies. Reaping requires the Denizen to literally frighten her victim to death (sometimes through repeated Ravagings). Reputedly used by

the fomorians themselves, the Reaping of Dreams reduces a lifetime of memories into a powerful surge of Dark Glamour. As the Dreamer dies, the player rolls a number of dice equal to his character's permanent Glamour (difficulty 5). The number of successes equals the amount of Glamour generated. A botch causes a psychic backlash in which the character gains a permanent point of Banality and is haunted by troublesome memories, visions and emotions. The murder of Dreamers is an abomination to most changelings (and even many Denizens) and punishable by death in many territories.

- **Reverie:** Most of the returning Denizens have yet to cultivate the creativity of human Dreamers. Many can't be bothered to spend the time required, but a few are fascinated by the prospect. The only adheene with extensive experience in Reverie are the aonides. Except for the muses, all Denizens are at +1 difficulty when trying to inspire this form of epiphany.

- **Rhapsody:** Changeling law prohibits Rhapsody because it permanently prevents a Dreamer from creating more Glamour. Most Denizens have been back in the Autumn World for too short a time to appreciate the magnitude of this crime. Fortunately, as with Reverie, few Denizens are practiced in this form of epiphany (+1 difficulty for all Denizens except aonides). Muses have strict rules against Rhapsody, but might cause it accidentally through their passion, or as an act of revenge.

Turning Back

Besides the Meridianus, there are several other difficulties in escaping the Autumn World. The Silver Ban remains in full effect; trods protected by the Silver Path are impossible for the Denizens to travel. The Green Paths of Balor known by most Denizens are one-way streets. Finding one which travels from the Waking back into the Dreaming may be the object of a quest all its own. Even if such a path is found, it is often claimed or guarded by some fell beast or hostile changelings. Further, many Denizens come to the Waking on missions from their superiors who may be unhappy to see their minions until they have completed their appointed task. Additionally, the "Week of Nightmare" surrounding Ravana's demise caused great dislocation in the Dreaming. Many homesteads, even entire Denizen nations, underwent tumultuous changes. Many Denizens came to the Autumn Realms as refugees and their homelands aren't necessarily where they left them.



Ultimately, the Storyteller should decide how "Earth-bound" she wants her game to be. If she wants the game to be a gritty, desperate battle just to survive in the mean streets of the World of Darkness, she may wish to increase these difficulties, throwing all sorts of obstacles into the characters' way before they can reach the Dreaming again. If the Storyteller prefers the high fantasy aspects of the Dreaming, she should diminish or eliminate the ban.

DREAMWAR

The Dreaming is created by human imagination, asleep or awake. The sleeping mind has a particular place in the Dreamscape, for here it is at its most receptive and powerful. Denizens are creatures of the in-between places, of the subconscious and unconscious mind. Born directly from human fears and desires, they have a deep and abiding connection with the dreaming mind, though most of them haven't had direct contact with humans in centuries. For the Denizens, chimera, changelings and other dark creatures of dream, the murky twilight of the human subconscious becomes the arena in which they battle to determine the very nature of reality. Largely an invisible battle fought with spirit and mind, this secret conflict goes on unnoticed by the prodigals and humanity alike, but is as important to Earth's fate as any other. Alien to this world, the Denizens feel more comfortable navigating the fluid realms of Dream than confronting the rigid realities of Banality. In dreams, space and time mean little, but to the Denizens they are no less real for all of that. Even after facing the idea that they are projections of the human mind, most Denizens continue to see the world of dreams as far more "real" than the mundane sphere.

Over time Dark-kin master the fundamentals of the waking world, but largely see humans as collections of dreamstuff, creatures of slumbering night-terrors and midnight flights of fancy. Looking past the surface realities, they glimpse the naked human soul. Many Denizens (though they may not admit it), gain a sneaking admiration for these dream-makers and even feel affection for them. The same cannot be said of the fomorians who have always seen — in so far as anyone may guess their views — humans as mere chattel. To the Dark Ones and those who serve them, humans are little more than dream

The Sleep Cycle

Given the importance of sleeping dreams to the Denizens, it's important to understand the human sleep cycle: Young adults tend to have between four and six sleep cycles every night. Stage One sleep, a transitional phase between wakefulness and sleep, typically lasts 30 seconds to 10 minutes. Stage Two, the first stage of true sleep, lasts from 20-45 minutes. Stages Three and Four are varying levels of deep sleep lasting anywhere from 20-45 minutes. At this point the sleeper returns to Stage Two and then enters REM Sleep, usually for only a few minutes in the first sleep cycle. If not interrupted, successive sleep cycles repeat throughout the evening (minus Stage One), the length of REM sleep increasing with each cycle until lasting about an hour by the end of the night.

REM Sleep: The Rapid Eye Movement stage is most associated with vivid and bizarre dreams. REM sleep constitutes approximately 20% of the adult sleep cycle. Infants and small children spend about 40% of their sleep in this stage. Alcohol and drug abuse (especially barbiturates) tends to disrupt REM sleep. People's Banality score may drop by two or more points during REM sleep.

NREM Sleep: Non-REM Sleep includes the other four stages of sleep. People do dream during these stages, but less vividly and about more mundane subjects. Their Banality score may drop by one point during NREM sleep.

batteries, collections of ephemeral raw materials to be used as they see fit, then discarded. In the old Fomorian Dream, this was humankind's only fitting role.

Dream Traps

While the effects of dreams are usually somewhat diffuse, more potent Dreamers (especially those with a Banality of three or less) can exert a concentrated effect on the nearby Dreaming. Such dreams become dream cages that reach out and ensnare unwary fae. Denizens in the Near Dreaming or those in Phantom Form or using Somnambulism (see above) in the mundane world are especially susceptible to such traps. These episodes may prove pleasant interludes or full-blown nightmares with the characters in starring rolls (either as victims or perpetrators of the violence). Trapped Denizens are usually unaware they are in someone else's dream. They're used to meeting chimera on the street anyway; who is to say what is and isn't a dream? While "traps" are usually not intentional, but natural occurrences of the uncon-

scious mind, some fae (especially those skilled in Oneiromancy) can render these experiences far more dangerous.

Storytellers may use this as an opportunity to further muddy the borders between dream and reality. If cleverly done, the Storyteller can obfuscate the players' entire sense of reality, layering Dreamwalking episodes with the everyday "reality" of the Dreaming and even the Denizen's own sleeping dreams. Just because this is a dream doesn't mean it has no consequences. The Storyteller may use these dreams for foreshadowing actual events, as backdrops for real vendettas of the fae (especially if one has Oneiromancy) or the Denizen may track the dream energies back to the source (not always as easy as it seems), providing himself with a new source of Glamour. Lastly, such traps may well force a conflict between a Denizen's primary and tertiary Ariá (see Chapter Three). This phenomenon may occasionally occur with changelings, but Denizens and other creatures of pure spirit are far more susceptible.





CHAPTER THREE: THE SLEEP OF REASON PRODUCES MONSTERS

*Bolt and bar the shutter,
For the foul winds blow;
Our minds are at their best this night,
And I seem to know
That everything outside us is
Mad as the mist and snow.*

— W.B Yeats, *Mad as the Mist and Snow*

The Dark-kin: A Breed Apart

Denizens are not your father's changelings. While the Kithain are in many ways unknowable to humans, they are still partially human and share many mortal concerns. Denizens spring from human dreams but know little about the everyday world. Outsiders, aliens, almost wholly different, yet tantalizingly familiar, the Dark-kin exhibit many differences from changelings. First, they have never been through the Changeling Way Ritual.

While changelings are fae spirits clothed (Denizens might say "imprisoned") in human flesh, the Denizens are more fully spirit. They have a physical presence in the Dreaming (at least most of the time) and have all the usual physical Attributes — Strength, Dexterity, Appearance, etc. — but have no natural physical substance in the mundane world. Furthermore, unlike the Kithain, the Denizens do not have age-based Seemings such as Childlings, Wilders and Grumps. They are not tied down to mortal concepts of aging as much as the Kithain, though they still largely mimic human forms.

Denizens, while not immortal, are very long lived. In the Dreaming some may live for hundreds of years or more before being reincarnated into the next life cycle (though it is suggested that Storytellers not allow players to have characters over 70 years old). Since Denizen children don't share the decisive Glamour advantage over adults enjoyed by their changeling counterparts, adult Denizens tend to restrict their freedom a little more. Another difference between Denizens and changelings is that Dark-kin do not follow the injunctions of the two great courts. In the place of Seeming and Court affiliations, a three-way metaphysical division known as Ariá defines Denizens.

Denizens' lack of court affiliation doesn't prevent them from allying themselves with one court or another. The fir-bholg and the fuaths known as "glaistigs" (two Denizen adheres native to Great Britain) frequently made common cause with the Unseelie Court in the past, though they largely split from their old allies after the War of Trees. While most of these two Denizen races still have much in common with the Unseelie Kithain, they hardly look at the Shadow Court as a friend. Most of the Dark-kin are generally more Unseelie in outlook, but enough of them share typical "Seelie" outlooks that trying to classify them with one court or another is futile. Although each Denizen race comes from an individual region or nationality, they don't necessarily emerge there in the waking world. Denizens are more attracted to particular types of dreams (and Dreamers) than to nationalities or geographical borders. This is especially true given that human geographical borders disappear in the Far and Deep Dreamings.

Ariá

Instead of Seemings and loyalty to the two courts, each adhene displays a trio of behaviors and forms peculiar to their particular race. Known as Ariá, these states are complex, subtle and — to a changeling's eyes — alien and unfathomable. Though tied to a number of factors, they are mostly connected to the Denizen's emotional state and relationship with the Dreaming. One Ariá is always primary for each Denizen; the other two play a secondary role in her life, but may become primary as circumstances dictate. A Denizen's Ariá may change with a particularly intense epiphany (especially Rapture), an emotional/spiritual awakening or a tragedy of

some sort. Some Denizens may change Ariá with even less cause. Ariá, while serving a role in the Dreaming, are a far more personal choice than a reflection of two great opposing philosophies (as with the Seelie and Unseelie Courts). Untethered by the Courts and human rationality, Denizens tend to be mercurial. Thus, the repercussions for changing Ariá are not nearly as severe for Denizens as they are for changelings who switch Courts. Denizen culture is both more fluid and less cohesive than changeling society. A Denizen's Ariá may have profound or subtle effects on her outward appearance, depending on her adhene. Ariá frequently age with the Denizen, but this is not always the case. For example: The moiræ's three forms mimic the aspects of the Three Fates (maiden, mother and crone) and these remain constant no matter how old or young the Denizen may be.

Since Ariá are psychological as well as physical conditions, each aspect of the Dark-kin's personality is also paired with a Legacy much like a changeling's Legacies are paired to his Court affiliation. The secondary Ariá is always just below the surface and may influence the Denizen's behavior, but does not override the primary Ariá. The battle for dominance is usually between the primary and secondary Ariá while the tertiary state is mostly inactive. While the tertiary Ariá is usually the weakest of the three, it plays an important role nonetheless. Though the third Ariá is never more than the faintest of whispers when the Denizen is awake, it may become quite active when he is submerged in someone else's dreams (most commonly by practicing Sombambulism or becoming caught in a Dream Trap). On such occasions the tertiary Ariá, rather than the secondary, vies with the primary characteristic for control.

System: A player decides which of his character's Ariá are primary, secondary and tertiary during character creation. The character's beginning primary Ariá determines his initial two Tempers: Willpower and Glamour (Denizens don't begin the game with the third Temper — Banality) and has an additional "illusory" point of Willpower or Glamour for the purpose of maintaining its primacy. Once chosen, this Ariá will always maintain its primary status, regardless of its current position in the line-up. The Denizen's lesser Ariá ratings run on "parallel tracks" with the primary. Thus, if a character's primary Ariá is the Araminae (see below), she starts with Glamour 2 and Willpower 4. If the player then uses Experience

Points to raise these ratings, the character's other Ariá likewise benefit. No Ariá may ever have a higher rating than 10, however. As with changelings, a Denizen's Legacies are important components of her personality and following the Quests and Bans laid out in her current primary Legacy is important to regaining Willpower (see **Changeling: The Dreaming** for rules on this).

When a Denizen enters a situation where a change of Ariá becomes possible, the player or Storyteller may decide that a battle for ascendancy between his character's various personalities may occur. No character may change Ariá more than once a Story and the Storyteller is the final authority on whether the situation warrants a roll to alter the character's condition. The contest is usually between the primary and secondary Ariá, and the two must make contested rolls against their current Willpower or Glamour (whichever is highest, difficulty 6) with the winner taking ascendancy until the next time a contest ensues. The dethroned primary Ariá falls all the way to the bottom of the line-up, thus automatically promoting the tertiary Ariá up to secondary status. The originally chosen "primary" attribute always adds a +1 to its dice pool, no matter where it falls in the current line-up. In the case of a primary/tertiary personality struggle, the character makes the same Glamour or Willpower roll. If the currently primary Ariá wins out, then things stay as they are, whereas if the tertiary Ariá wins it takes the primary position and the primary Ariá is "dethroned" and falls to tertiary status until the next contest. See the example below for a concrete explanation of how this works.

The Three Ariá

What follows is a brief description of the three Ariá:

- **The Dioniae:** This portion of the Denizen's psyche is primarily associated with instinctive, often aggressive, impulses. The Dioniae deals with the need for immediate satisfaction of primitive biological needs (food, sex, Glamour), not necessarily a bad thing unless it goes unchecked — which in Denizens it often does. Dark-kin rarely have any problem with expressing thoughts or actions that would be shameful to most humans. The Dioniae is not an "Unseelie" Ariá (there is no formalized code), though it is often perceived as such. The Dioniae is the most natural state for many Denizens, though others avoid this Ariá when they can.

Beginning Glamour: 4

Beginning Willpower: 2

- **The Araminae:** This is the rational everyday mind that most people exhibit in their daily lives. The Araminae tries to control the Dioniae and represents constructive energies, though it is every bit as self-preoccupied as the Dioniae. In this Ariá the Denizen most closely approaches a "rational" (not necessarily Banal) human state of mind. Common sense and pragmatic decision making are easier in this state, but the Denizen is still influenced by baser desires.

Beginning Glamour: 2

Beginning Willpower: 4

- **The Apolliae:** The Apolliae loosely resembles the conscience, but a Denizen's "higher self" differs vastly from that of a human or changeling. It involves the Denizen's higher (some might argue, Seelie) instincts, such as honor and a personal code of ethics. This is a simplification since the higher ethos of a Denizen may value a code quite different from that held by the Seelie Court. As an example, some Dark-kin may find the selective murder of other beings a high calling. Whatever the Denizen's moral code, the Apolliae will do everything it can to follow it to the letter, even at the Denizen's expense.

Beginning Glamour: 3

Beginning Willpower: 3

Legacies

Denizens subscribe to the same range of Legacies observed by the Kithain. These Legacies are detailed on pages 129-135 of **Changeling: the Dreaming**, and pages 52-57 of the **Changeling Players Guide**. Unbound by the restrictions of Court, however, the Dark-kin may have any Legacy associated with any Ariá, almost without restriction. The Ariá determines how the player should interpret the character's Legacies.

For example: A character may match the Unseelie Knave Legacy to the Dioniae and the Seelie Paladin Legacy to the Apolliae — or vice versa. In the first case the primal desires of the Dioniae would make the Knave persona all the more perverse while the higher aspects of the Apolliae would add nobility to the Paladin archetype. In the reversal of this situation, the Dioniae would make the competitive, thrill-seeking aspects of the Paladin Legacy an out of control addiction, while the Apolliae would make the Knave some sort of "holy tempter" who

Example

Mary is playing an acheri character named Davrek. She decided he doesn't have much of a conscience and is mainly concerned with self-gratification, thus she settles on the Dioniae as Davrek's permanent, primary Ariá. Davrek's Tempers are Glamour 4 and Willpower 2 to start. This also means his Dioniae starts out on top and always has +1 to its Willpower or Glamour pool (whichever is higher) for the purpose of maintaining or regaining ascendancy. Mary may then put her remaining Aria in any order she wishes. She decides that Davrek's conscience (as represented by his Apolliae) is boiling just under the surface and puts it in the secondary position. Lastly, she decides that he is rarely in a "normal" human mind state and puts his Araminae personality in the tertiary position.

Next, Mary puts enough freebie points into her character to give Davrek Glamour 6 and Willpower 4 in his primary Ariá. Similarly, Davrek's other Ariá benefit from these freebie points, thus in his Araminae state he has Glamour 4 and Willpower 6, while his Apolliae persona has 5 in both Glamour and Willpower.

Once in play, Davrek enters the Autumn World and comes to the sudden realization that he is, in some respects, not real, but merely a creature of dream. Forced to inspect his fundamental view of reality, his Apolliae persona attempts to take control of his psyche. This pits his Dioniae's higher Temper (Glamour 6) plus the additional "illusory" die because it is his primary Ariá versus his Apolliae's dominant Temper (Glamour or Willpower are both 5 in this case). Thus, the Dioniae has 7 dice total while the Apolliae only has five. Despite the uneven odds, however, Mary rolls only 2 successes for his Dioniae while the Apolliae rolls 3 successes; the Apolliae now becomes the primary persona and the Dioniae is shunted down to the tertiary position (but still maintains its +1 die for any future contests). The Araminae, by default, is moved to the secondary position.

views corruption as a holy cause (and, thus, wholly justified). Similarly, the Araminae would see both Legacies from a rational perspective, seeking to justify and perform the dictates of that persona in a rational, logical manner. A character may, of course, choose the same Legacy for two or even all three Ariá, though the Legacy will be interpreted very differently in each case. Some of the Legacy/Ariá combinations possible are more difficult to play; the Storyteller has the final say as to what combinations are appropriate to his Chronicle.

Belief and Governance

Though merely the stuff of human dreams, the Dark kin remain no less passionate in their beliefs. Denizen beliefs imitate human thought, echoing the aspects of human nature usually suppressed by its dreamers. The various adhenes are scattered across the Dreaming in a wide variety of environments. They have found that the Dreaming is large enough to contain all forms of belief or disbelief. In governance, while some Dark-kin favor the customs and leadership familiar to the feudal sidhe, other Denizen societies have adopted strange variants of theocracy, democracy or communism. Still others live in tribal situations or as anarchists with no governance at all. When considering greater metaphysical belief systems or "religions," Denizens may variably be animistic pagans, monotheists or worshipers of vast pantheons of great creatures in the Dreaming (including some monstrous chimera, the fomorians and, to a lesser extent, the Tuatha dé Danaan). Indeed, the fervor with which some Denizens now serve the awakening Elder Darks surpasses the most zealous human fanatics in its intensity.



Acheri (AU-chair-ee)

In India the myths hold that the acheri live in the mountain tops and bring sickness to humans unless appeased. In other regions they go by different names. Whether as the aerika of Greece, the Ma-mo of Tibet, the lamastu of ancient Babylonian lore or the macachera of the Brazilian Amazon, they have been feared and reviled throughout history as wicked bringers of disease and corruption — both of the body and the soul. “Inflammatory prejudice!” object the acheri. While not denying their role in the world, the acheri stress their importance to the ordained order of things. Disease is simply a part of the natural balance, a way of clearing out the “deadwood,” and the acheri its humble functionaries. Weeding out the sick leaves the strong to flourish. Likewise, when questioned on their penchant for ethical corruption, they point out that without temptation how can one test one’s faith or purity? Whatever their justifications, most acheri simply have contempt for any life beyond their own — though there are occasional exceptions to this rule. Their brethren see acheri who don’t further the world’s pain as traitors to the cause, though they are verbally reviled more often than physically punished. After all, such “vile” humanitarian sentiments are just another sort of corruption.

Whether in the waking world or in the Dreaming, the acheri rank with the redcaps as the most loathed of fae. An itinerant adhene, the acheri followed humanity’s migrations in the days of old. More knowledgeable about humans and human weaknesses than many Denizens, the acheri first cast their darkling shadow during a time when illness was not a matter of germs and viruses, but of curses and evil spirits. Times have changed, and the acheri have changed with them. Even during the Miririm, the acheri kept a careful eye on humanity, lending its corrupting touch to human progress whenever possible. Indeed, there are *almost* as many acheri among the Evanescent as there are aonides, though the latter group is more welcomed by the Kithain. Those fae dedicated to preserving life typically see the acheri as abominations. Changelings attempted, unsuccessfully, to exterminate the acheri who remained after the Tessarakonta. In the aftermath of their banishment during the Miririm, some acheri continue to serve what they saw as their cosmically ordained role, though many follow their own petty desires. A very few eliminate the ugly, the mean-spirited and the irredeemable from the world despite their fel-

lows’ mockery. Spirits of corruption, they are themselves particularly susceptible to temptation.

Lifestyles: Creatures of extremes, acheri may be tatterdemalions living lives of ascetic denial or hedonists wallowing in creature comforts. The first category see the second as dilettantes, not adequately committed to their holy task of scourging the planet. The second type sees the first as abysmally depressing. Acheri tend to be loners, rarely associating beyond a superficial level even with their own kind. Acheri family life is about as close to hell as one can come; most acheri are both abusers and abused. Acheri may, however, seek out companionship to feed their thirst for sensation. In order to make themselves more acceptable to companions, many acheri claim that they are the benign exception to the rule or insist that acheri as a people have been horribly maligned. More familiar with the human world than most adhene, Evanescent acheri seek proximity to professions where they can perpetuate their corruption and garner wealth to further their lifestyles. Doctors who don’t heal, psychiatrists who drive men mad and district attorneys who propagate, rather than punish, corruption are but a few of the professions they pursue.

Ariá

At first glance acheri look like normal humans, typical of whatever cultural group first dreamed them. They may be attractive or ugly. They tend to dress at the far ends of the class spectrum, in either very rich or very poor voile. In every Ariá the acheri has an unnaturally cold and dark shadow. This is even true, though to a lesser extent, in the waking realms.

- **Dioniae:** Acheri in this personality exude spiritual corruption. The actual physical signs are small, the impression more subliminal. Many people don’t make the connection that there’s anything out of the ordinary about the acheri, instead feeling their own baser instincts on the rise in his presence.

- **Araminae:** In this form the acheri’s physical corruption boils to the surface. Denizens in this Ariá have an unhealthy look; their skin may be very pale and clammy or red limned with blisters and sores. Although this does not impact negatively on the acheri’s abilities, his Appearance drops by one point.

- **Apolliae:** In this form the acheri’s shadow covers her faerie mien, making her visible only as a black silhouette with pale white or red eyes. The living embodiment of sickness and corruption, acheri in this Ariá



forget for a time their own petty pleasures and dedicate themselves to their appointed profession (expressed through the Denizen's dominant Legacy).

Affinity: Actor or Fae

BIRTHRIGHTS

• **Plague Nervosa** — The acheri are masters, some say progenitors, of chimera known as Plague Nervosa. By spending a point of Glamour the acheri can send his shadow away from his body to infect someone with a particularly potent chimerical disease. The acheri makes a roll against his current Glamour (difficulty 6). The shadow takes form for one turn per success. The shadow has all the speed and combat skills of the acheri himself. Anyone whom the shadow manages to touch during this period falls prey to a chimerical disease (Storyteller's choice, see **Changeling: the Dreaming** page 277 for details). The acheri may infect any given person only once per day. Furthermore, by invoking the Wyrd, acheri can create particularly virulent chimerical diseases in the real world, a worrisome prospect since some chimerical diseases have no known cure in the Waking. The final advantage to this power gives the acheri a widespread immunity to both disease and poison.

• **Enticement** — “I can resist anything but temptation.” Acheri embody spiritual as well as physical corruption. Whether their role is as a destroyer or tester, they work to tempt their targets from the ideals they hold dear. To this end, whenever using his guile to lead someone off the track of virtue, an acheri adds +1 to his Charisma and Manipulation dice pools (+2 in the Dioniae Ariá), even if this gives the Denizen a temporary Attribute over five. This level is illusory and not marked on the character sheet, since it is *only* useful for corruption. The “truly virtuous” may actually have a negative reaction to the spirit once they figure out his true nature (-1 or more to *all* of the acheri’s Social Attributes for that person only). Such people make very challenging and tempting targets for the acheri.

Frailties

• **Rebound** — The greatest victims of the acheri’s corrupting influence are the acheri themselves. Many acheri cultivate their vices like fine wines and find it difficult to fulfill any long term plans that don’t involve their baser pleasures in some ways. Every acheri must take one addiction of some sort (e.g., food, sex, drugs). Whenever directly confronted with the object of his desires, he must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 7) or pursue that pleasure until sated. While the acheri is in his Apolliae Ariá, this difficulty is reduced by two or more. His self-hatred for giving in to temptation in this state can be doubly distressing. Some acheri revel in this corruption; the more ascetic ones give in reluctantly, then punish themselves for their weakness in orgies of auto-flagellation or self-mutilation. Even those acheri who revel in their decadence frequently possess a good deal of self-loathing.

• **The Scarlet Ban** — Because of its holy status, acheri will never use their Birthrights against someone wearing an article of red clothing or a prominent red accessory (small amounts of red mixed in with other colors won’t repel them). Because of this ban and their inherent purity, the knights of the Red Branch are particularly hated by the acheri. Acheri may, of course, use other Arts or physical means against someone wearing this color, but they may not attempt to physically remove the article of clothing. This Frailty lifts as soon as the target removes the protective clothing. Putting something red on after the acheri has struck has no effect. The acheri keep quiet about this frailty and it is not widely known.

Stereotypes

Aonides — Such delightful hedonists, they tempt humans for their own pleasure, making our jobs all the easier.

Fir-bholg — Our leaders of old in the days of the Tessarakonta. If they choose to lead again, we may follow, though the past has proven they are no more immune to our persuasions than any other fae.

Fuaths — Inconsequential.

Keremet — Beware. These living corpses are largely immune to our persuasions. They have caused almost as much death as we, but take no pleasure in their work. Pity.

Moiræ — Arrogant hypocrites. They serve fate in *their* way and would best give us leave to serve it in ours.

Naraka — “*Tyger, tyger, burning bright. Singed by man’s atomic light.*” Hah! We remember them of old, even if they do not remember themselves. They have become creatures of blind destruction and seek to reconstruct their past. Perhaps we will aid them in this, perhaps not...

Changelings — The flesh they wrap around themselves may protect them from Banality, but not from us. They’re little more enlightened than humans.

Humankind — They give us birth with their dreams; we kill them with ours. Nothing personal, it’s just the way of things.

Quote: “Back, foul tempter?” Ah, I am disappointed. I merely seek the free exchange of ideas and thought you too sophisticated for such petty prejudices.

Aonides (AO-nids)

The aonides or "muses" claim a heritage similar to the satyrs in terms of lineage. Boasting descent from Mount Olympus itself, they insist they are the sons and daughters of Zeus, ruler of the Gods, and of the Titaness Mnemosyne (or Memory). The aonides are incredibly erotic creatures and passionately love humans. Unfortunately, love and hate often exist in equal measure. "Hades hath no fury like an aonide scorned." These Denizens can be very cruel when it comes to the game of love. They flock to human creativity like moths to an open flame. While all of the Dreaming's children need Glamour to survive, aonides seem addicted to the rush that accompanies the epiphanies they inspire. The muses plunge themselves into the artistic lives of anyone around them, craving new pieces of art or recently written songs. When the Dreamers around them aren't in the middle of creating, aonides steer conversations in the direction of art. They behave as sounding boards, critiquing the inspirational thoughts of those around them. Aonides spend much of their time Musing those with the motivation to create and Ravaging those who lack the drive to do anything with their imagination. They are also great creators in their own right. Most of them have at least a few dots in Performance and declare a specialty in one particular art form. They treat that art form like a personal totem, linking their sense of identity to the creative process. The adheene sees muses who have no artistic talents of their own, but who merely inspire these gifts in mortals, as poseurs. They nevertheless serve an important role as patrons and keepers of Glamour.

Aonides become very emotionally attached to the Dreamers they inspire. They sometimes treat their Dreamers like pets, showering them with affection, but retaining superiority over them in their own minds. Musers often assume that their Dreamers would be uninspired boors without them and sometimes overestimate their own necessity to the creative process. Dreamers that a muse influences usually believe they cannot create without her. When an aonide and her Dreamer part company, the Dreamer enters a creative vacuum that lasts until he gets over his broken heart.

Lifestyles: Aonides know human culture like no other Denizen. They frequented the mortal world often in the days before the Miririm, gracing mortal visionaries with their presence and inspiring them to artistic greatness. Many aonides remember the satyrs from the old days, when life involved singing, dancing and lovemaking on the shores of the Mediterranean. Even to this day,

they cannot help but immerse themselves in the hearts and minds of Dreamers. They Muse and Ravage with much more reverence and glee than the Kithain. A muse is nothing if she is not inspiring someone. They often form emotional attachments to their Dreamers. Such relationships may provide a catalyst for changing their Ariá. Aonides can be of either sex. Most of them choose to be bisexual. Only a few prefer one gender for romantic relations. When an aonide is in love, or otherwise fixated on some person, she takes human form to be with the object of her desire. The aonide usually takes on the physical appearance of someone whom the target would find most attractive. If the aonide's chosen paramour already has a lover, the muse often assumes the partner's form. She then slips in and out of her intended's life while the real lover is away, causing a good deal of confusion in the process.

Ariá

Although muses trace their ancestry to ancient Greece, they take their forms from the erotic dreams of anyone from any culture. Their complexion, size, hair and eye colors vary widely, from the most pallid to the darkest, the most petite to the statuesque. Aonides tend to be attractive and, although not all are as beautiful as they appear, they are frequently skilled in the arts of illusion. Togas and Grecian chitons serve as their most common voile. Aonides' outer appearance doesn't change significantly with their Ariá, though they often affect some minor changes in their clothing, hairstyle or make-up. Aonides tend to dress tastefully, though their visage is disconcertingly arousing even in the most sedate attire. They possess a subtle grace and taste that relies on natural beauty, instead of flash. Few creatures of Dream look as human as the aonides; even in their fae mien, most can easily pass for human.

• **Dioniae:** The muses are unparalleled in the pursuit of pleasure. In this Ariá the aonide may be carefree and carnal, craving pleasure above all other considerations, or she may be as inconsolably depressed as the most tragically inspired poet. Aonides in the first category unashamedly embrace hedonism. Those of the second type may alternately see the world as cruel and tragic. Also known as the Mneme Ariá, because of the painful memories sometimes involved, the Dioniae side of aonides pushes them to seek extremes of sensation. Aonides often assume this form when rejected by a lover or otherwise "dumped."

• **Araminae:** Being a muse is not all high art or lovemaking. In this, the everyday mind, the aonide is



most adept at dealing with the day to day necessities of renting gallery space, dealing with agents or balancing the books. Since most muses' lives involve whirlwinds of passion, some actually enjoy this opportunity to be "grounded" for a while. Aonides often revert to their Araminae when threatened or hurt, using it as a barrier against their own weaknesses.

- **Apolliae:** In this form the muse promotes both love and art, attempting to take them to their highest and most abstract state. This represents true love rather than carnal desire, and the muse gives her inspiration in selfless appreciation of the great art created by such pure passions.

Affinity: Actor or Scene

BIRTHRIGHTS

- **Grace of Calliope** — Aonides possess a talent for subtle manipulation. Even when not intentionally aware of using her guidance, the Muse is always charming, winning the hearts of everyone around her. The Grace of Calliope isn't rooted in beauty, but in the controlled use of inspiration and suggestion to manipulate the opinions and actions of others. All aonides add +2 points to either their Manipulation or Charisma (player's choice), even if it brings them above the maximum of five. Aonides cannot botch rolls relating to Persuasion or Performance. Also, unlike most other Denizens, the muses do not suffer from the Silver Ban.

- **Adonis' Ravaging** — This Birthright gives the aonides a formidable advantage in acquiring Glamour. In addition to the standard methods, aonides may steal Glamour by successfully seducing their prey. Some form of passionate embrace is required for the use of this Birthright, be it an ardent kiss or full sexual intercourse. Aonides do not automatically use this Birthright on everyone they have relations with; Adonis's Ravaging requires conscious activation. Most use it sparingly to take "just a little" when in need, but with this Birthright, an aonide can turn lust and passion into a weapon. Aonides often use the Grace of Calliope to lure their enemies before rendering their targets Banal and useless after seducing them with Adonis' Ravaging. Once the muse has seduced the target, the player makes a contested roll of her Manipulation + Subterfuge against the target's Willpower. The aonide steals a point of temporary Glamour for every success, but cannot raise her temporary score above her permanent Glamour level.

Frailty

- **Arachne's Folly** — Aonides cannot handle the humility of admitting that someone has more artistic talent than they do. They insist on seeing themselves as the most creative beings in

the Autumn World or the Dreaming. If an aonide hears that someone is better than he at his chosen artistic focus, he challenges the "upstart" to a competition to determine who is better. The audience of the duel, whether the competition happens in a gallery or on stage, decides the winner. If the aonide loses the competition, the full wrath of the muse is brought to bear. The aonide does everything in his power to make the victorious artist's life miserable (and often that of the foolish judges), even to the extent of neglecting new talents. Because of this Frailty's increased effect in the Dreaming, aonides may not take the Flaw: Overconfident.

Stereotypes

Acheri — Unpleasant creatures. Don't stand too close to one; you might catch something.

Fir-bholg — Nasty brutes. Let them scuttle around in the woods, so they never scare our precious Dreamers.

Fuaths — The magic and wisdom of these Dark-kin is strong indeed; charm them, so we too may have their power at our disposal.

Keremet — So cynical. We do not trust them among our Dreamers.

Moirae — We remember them from the old times and our rivalry continues to this day. They see themselves as protectors of humanity and may act territorial when we inspire someone they have singled out. Be wary of them; they are not fond of us.

Naraka — Fearsome in battle, these Denizens could be very useful. Be exceedingly respectful to them, for they possess battle skills we do not. You never know when you might need the help of a strong arm. Whatever you do, do not cross them, you will probably not live long if you do.

Changelings — Some Kithain are useful, others just plain boorish. The sidhe could hold the key to power in the society of dreams; House Fiona seems particularly easy to seduce. We remember the satyrs, our Olympian companions of old. They remain suspicious of us, but that was so very long ago. Now they are seen as lewd rather than inspired lovers. Kithain who pose a threat — such as redcaps and their ilk — should be drained of their creative power.

Humankind — We would be nothing without them. Love them; Muse them; revel in their imaginations, but never fear them. They are, after all, only human.

Quote: *We inspire the best that humanity has to offer: love and creativity. How could anyone be greater than we?*

Fir-bholg (FEAR-bolg)

Formed in the crucible of the mythic age, the fir-bholg were beaten between the hammer of the fomorians and the anvil of the Tuatha dé Danaan. Quenched in the dark realms, they are now a blade once again eager to cut into the flesh realms. Ancient masters of Ireland and forgotten sea realms, the fir-bholgs lost their place as rulers long ago. The wheel of destiny turns once more and the fir-bholg now strive to reclaim their lordship of old. Most fae, while openly distrustful of this brooding adhene, often see in them a grim reflection of themselves and their ancestors. Fallen on hard times, fir-bholg are spirits of the wilderness, wise in nature and animal lore, but largely ignorant of the ways of civilization. Obviously not fond of the Tuatha dé Danaan or their "children" (the sidhe and other changelings), some now serve their old foes the fomorians in hopes of regaining old glory. Others follow their own rough code of honor, distrusting the Elder Darks.

The fir-bholg, through all their hardships, have become the ultimate race of predator-survivors. Thrust through the Mists into an alien world, they face their doom with stout hearts and eager spirits. Dreaming and flesh realms both sit on the edge of the Evernight; the fir-bholg see themselves as the beings who will mid-wife the birth of the age yet to come. The cycle has turned; again ignorance and fear are the coin of the realm and soon the beast-kings shall return to reclaim their glory. Wild and uncultured, the fir-bholg bridge the gap between the beastly fomorians and the refined Tuatha dé Danaan, and they bear the marks of both. These Denizens are forever wrapped in their wild otherworldliness. The very plants and animals of the flesh realm react oddly to them; the toys and tools of men are brushed aside by the forces they command.

In spite of the changes the Dark Realms have wrought upon them, the fir-bholg remember a greater time. The first true kings of Ireland, they are drawn to poetry and language. Love and loyalty are not lost upon them, but almost always it must be love and loyalty to their own kind. Loners by nature, they prefer the wastes of the world away from the busy, confusing whirl of cities. Despite this, these flesh realm neophytes seek out the company of other adhene, changelings and even Nunnehi. They are, behind their strong words and loud boasts, painfully aware that the other Kithain live in a world half of flesh and half of dream; it is a world that the men of Bholg will never fully understand. Only the most stub-

born of the fir-bholg refuse to admit that these "changelings" possess knowledge that they crave. Fir-bholg often take the bodies of people who have recently had a close brush with death. From this sobering event, the spirit of the fir-bholg takes shape and begins to grow.

Lifestyle: Fir-bholg are chaos-bringers. Though they see themselves as stable beings, chaos revolves around them, affecting areas they frequent. When something impossible happens, however, the fir-bholg emerge to lead the shocked survivors away. They seek out places where the powers of nature lay low the frail houses and towers of men.

Ariá

Whether male or female, fir-bholg exude a startling presence. Tall and foreboding, they stand out like a barelimbed tree in a forest. They possess great spreading antlers, which are a source of no small pride to them. When not naked (which they often are in their wild haunts) they wear simple animal-skin clothing and adornments.

- **Dioniae:** Fir-bholg within this Ariá are closest to their fomorian blood and their primitive drives. Their antlers are large and sharp and they flaunt both their alien nature and their demand for sacrifice. Laws, save their own ancient traditions, don't really exist unless there is someone or something nearby willing to enforce them. Woe to those who stand between such a fir-bholg and what she desires!

- **Araminae:** Within this Ariá fir-bholg achieve a synthesis of instinct and intellect. It gives them enough patience, forethought and persistence to accomplish their goals. The antlers of a fir-bholg are largest at this point and they take great care in their speech, wanting every word to hold authority, grace and meaning.

- **Apolliae:** This Ariá finds the fir-bholg trying to shed some of their more primitive aspects. Their attentions turn to how things are made, and how people (and fae) are organized. The repercussions of their actions haunt them, occupying their thoughts.

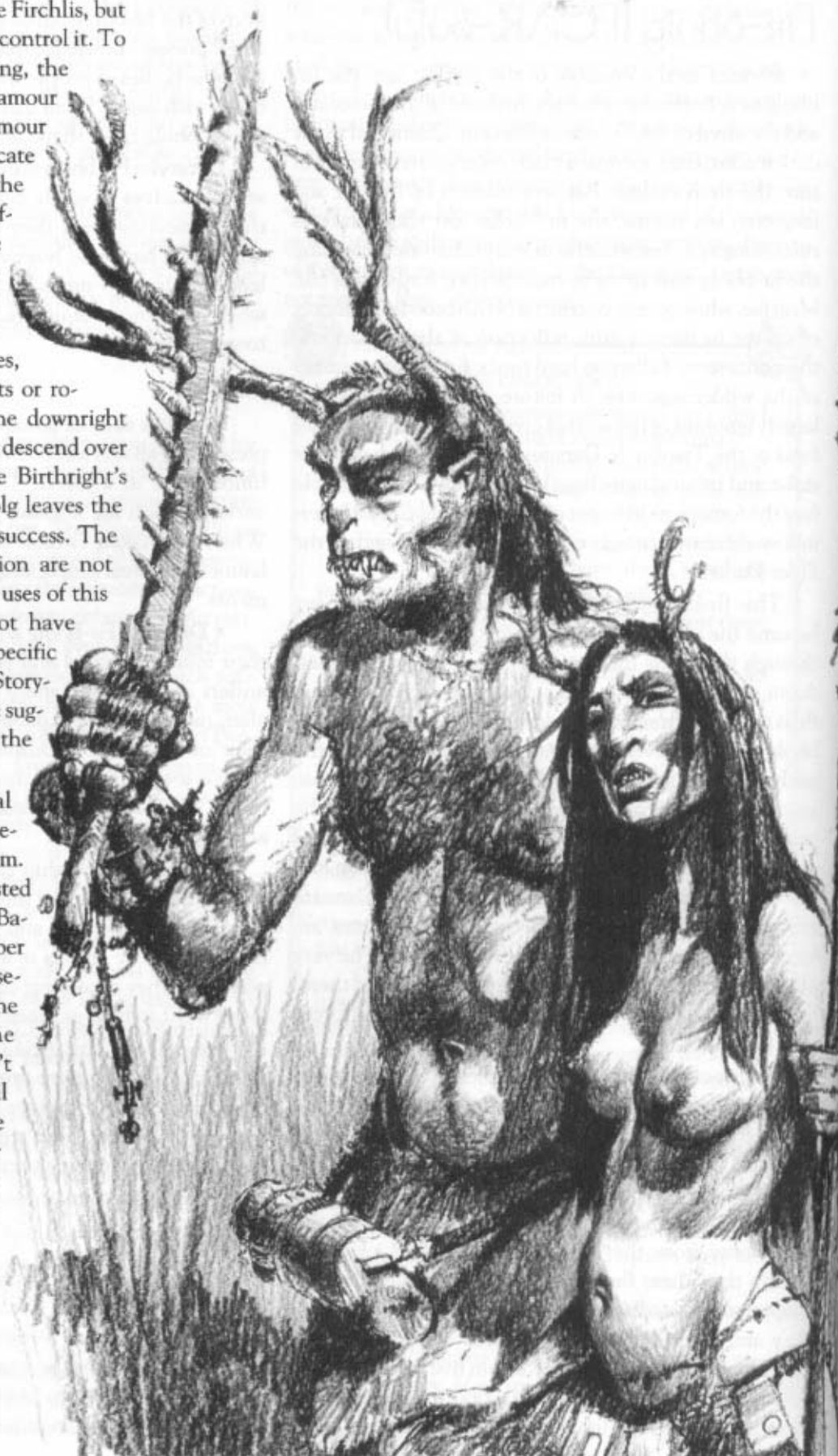
Affinity: Nature or Fae

Birchrights

- **Breath of the Firchlis** — The fir-bholg have learned the ways of the Dreaming's ever-changing landscape. Each of these Denizens sees herself as a stable point, surrounded by the wracking waves of randomness. "Things happen" around a fir-bholg; plants bloom in the dead of winter or die in minutes on the vine. There is no

way to stop the Breath of the Firchlis, but the fir-bholg can attempt to control it. To affect things of the Dreaming, the fir-bholg burns a point of Glamour and rolls his current Glamour (Difficulty 8). Successes indicate that the fir-bholg has called the Firchlis over an area. The effects are variable, from the very minor (1 success, a pooka's ears grow slightly longer, leaves change color) to the very creepy (3 successes, swarms of chimerical insects or rodents enter the area) to the downright scary (5 successes, the Mists descend over the surrounding area). The Birthright's effects last until the fir-bholg leaves the area or for one minute per success. The effect's strength and duration are not cumulative with additional uses of this Birthright. Fir-bholg do not have any direct control over the specific effect; this is left up to the Storyteller. The player may make suggestions, however, which the Storyteller may adapt.

By burning additional Glamour the fir-bholg can create changes in the flesh realm. This is done through a contested roll of Glamour versus the Banality in the area. The number of successes determines the severity of the effect. Again, the continuum runs from the merely annoying (cars won't start), to the unnerving (hail falls from a clear sky) to the incredibly spooky (the power grid goes out, a large storm appears in a previously clear sky).



Frailties

• **Eochaid's Hunger** — Each fir-bholg has an unusual dietary habit, often (but not always) related to his fomorian ties. The Denizen must eat a particular unprepared food once a week, be it freshly caught fish, carrion, oak roots or rainwater. Although he need not subsist entirely on this diet, the fir-bholg must have this food to exist. Without access to it he loses one point of Stamina per day after the first week. Additionally he must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 7) to resist eating the first source with which he comes into contact. When his Stamina reaches one, he begins to lose one level of Health per day and will do anything within his power to get what he needs, including stealing from a superior or assaulting his own friends — anything. Clearly, if a fir-bholg's health reaches Incapacitated, he perishes.

• **Sacrifice** — Ancient overlords of humanity, the beast-folk once wrought potent spells to facilitate their collection of dreams through sacrificial offerings. As the millennia passed, these magics fell into disrepair; now the fir-bholg must receive sacrifices merely to gain the Glamour that other fae take for granted. Without this forfeiture all rolls by the fir-bholg to gather Glamour in the Autumn World are at +3 difficulty. This Frailty requires that a human Dreamer willingly offer up something of great value to the fir-bholg. The fir-bholg receiving the ceremonial offering must roll his Glamour (difficulty 6). Each success reduces the Frailty's penalty for one week per success. The fir-bholg may use whatever method she wishes to coax, force or frighten the person into performing the sacrifice, but no fir-bholg may have more than one sacrifice working for her at any given time. Subsequent offerings always override the previous sacrifice in both effectiveness and duration.

The offering itself may be a treasured possession, or a human or animal sacrifice. If it is the former, the item must be consecrated to the fir-bholg and destroyed. Animals or humans sacrificed may be destroyed or dedicated to the fir-bholg's service. Sacrificed animals and humans need be of no value to the donor.

Quote: *Have the times of flaming rain come again? Does the sky bleed and the ground tremble? Such times are not for your kind, little Kithain. Leave your court, come, there is shelter under my antlers, and my hands will feed you and from my mouth you will be taught how to weather the Long Winter.*

Stereotypes

Acheri — Wasting spirits who hide in the hills. They can help you rid your lands of unwanted peoples, but let not their shadow fall upon your path.

Aonides — These take a hand in the flesh realm. Play not their games, unless they offer truly worthwhile stakes.

Fuaths — Pretty their faces, horrid their deformities. When the masters return, we shall slaughter most and have the rest tend to the cattle. Until then, beware, for they are deadly warriors.

Keremet — The Mists have blocked these creatures' memories, but not ours. Lackeys of the sidhe and traitors during the Tessarakonta, these foul fae are like a cur that returns to its own vomit. We shall hunt them in the Waking as we do in the dark realms

Moiræ — Their ability to call upon Dán makes them dangerous foes. Fata has had its way with our kind again and again. No more! They would be wise if they stood aside from our path.

Naraka — Dangerous and fearsome warriors, along with the Kithain they are our greatest obstacle to gaining the Near Dreaming and the flesh realms beyond. They have changed much in recent times and are now an unknown quantity.

Changelings — Odd and treacherous. Bits and pieces of the Tuatha dé Danaan sometimes show in them. They are tied to the Autumn World and, as is the doom of the flesh realms, they will die there. The Unseelie are at least somewhat akin to us in that their eyes look with eagerness upon the changes that are to come.

Humankind — Cruel this, for fate to give such foolish beings so much power over the children of the Dreaming. Numb to the worlds around them, still they fight to protect what little they have. In them you can sometimes find strength and allies.

Fuath (FOO-aurth)

Fuaths are a dream-species comprised of a wide variety of wild spirits and have appeared in many guises throughout the world. In Celtic tradition they include the caoineag, the urisk, the glaistig and glashtin. They are the deives of Lithuania, the berchta or "stomach-slasher" (Germany, Austria and Switzerland) and the chertovka of Russia. Each fuath has one animal attribute (most frequently the lower body, but sometimes the head) which resembles that of a given animal. Unlike the pooka, they cannot change completely into that beast, but like satyrs are stuck with that one animal trait. Often more bestial than human in their thinking, the fuath avoid large population centers, preferring natural realms such as the Forest or the animal dukedoms of Quox and Mux (though they hardly share the frenetic humor native to these lands).

Forces of nature, protectors of the wild, fuaths can be kind and nurturing or bloodthirsty and cruel. Ever capricious, fuath act unpredictably in any given situation. They don't forget slights easily, though their capacity for love is nearly as boundless as their ability to hate. One cannot find a truer friend or more implacable enemy. There are few experiences more chilling than seeing the feral eyes and glinting claws of the fuath in the forest at night. The old tales speak of fuaths herding cattle for farmers and looking after sick children, but also mention their perverse delight in seducing, drowning and devouring those who came too close to their pools.

The fuaths' animal attributes have led many to speculate that they are distantly related to the satyrs. If true, the similarities end with the physical. While satyrs mix the wildness of nature with human civility, the fuaths are almost fully creatures of the wild. Vicious and territorial, female fuaths especially are skilled warriors, though they primarily use these abilities to defend their own territory rather than take lands belonging to another. This is true to a lesser extent of the male of the species. Whereas female fuaths tend to be communal spirits and take care of such necessities as hunting and defending their tribal boundaries, males tend to be more solitary and interested in plumbing the deepest secrets of nature. This is even true in the waking world where the female fuaths have created mutual support groups to help each other survive and explore the Autumn Realms, while the males of the species prefer to survive or perish on their own. Male fuaths can be just as dangerous or

nurturing, but their personality shifts do not usually swing back and forth so quickly.

Lifestyle: Whether in the Dreaming or the Autumn Realms, fuaths prefer wilderness settings. To them, cities are great perversions, dead holes in the fabric of nature. Water is a major component of the fuaths' lives and many of their rituals revolve around it.

Ariá

Every fuath represents a pairing of animal and human natures; their physical and mental characteristics strongly mirror this division. Whether they appear as goat-legged glaistigs, deer-hoofed Baoban Sith, fishtailed ceasg, the owl-eyed deives or dog-faced Pi Nereske, the fuath comprise the animal people banished from the human world by the Tuatha dé Danaan. As extreme as their physical dichotomy appears, it is dwarfed by that of their psyche.

- **Dioniae:** Fuaths in this form reflect their most primal instincts. In this Ariá they visibly manifest their animal attribute, though some may try to hide it beneath concealing clothing. Emotionally they are almost fully animals, their instincts barely ameliorated by their human intelligence. In this form fuaths are at their most joyous, vicious and free.

- **Araminae:** In this Ariá the fuath takes on a fully human form, though there is still something vaguely animalistic about them. The way they walk, eat and talk reflects vestiges of their true nature. Nevertheless, they may be quite attractive to humans and are frequently rumored to use this form to lure humans to their destruction. As the animal form disappears, so too recedes the animal nature and the fuath is left with an emotional state that is more truly "human." Unfortunately, few fuaths have the background to appreciate this portion of their psyche. This Ariá is often their least favorite. Some say they feel "caged" when in human form. Fuaths often transfer this hatred of their own human nature to humans (and the half-human changelings) as a whole.

- **Apolliae:** Little different from the Dioniae form in appearance (the fuath regains her animal attributes), this Ariá reconciles the opposing extremes of animal and human nature. Animal passions and human intellect cooperate in this form, variably expressing themselves in sophisticated codes of governance, guileful and ruthless military stratagems or the most passionate of high art.

Affinity: Nature or Scene



Birchrights

• **Beast Tongue** — Animals, plants, even stones — fuaths are one with the spirits of nature and can communicate with them all. In the Autumn World, however, this ability is much reduced. The fuath can only speak with animals, though this ability automatically extends to mundane animals without the need to invoke the Wyrd. Of course, the creature being addressed dictates the limitations of this communication. Some may not wish to speak with the Denizen while others are not notable conversationalists. This ability also gives the fuath +1 die to all Charisma rolls involving the elemental inanimæ and other naturæ.

• **Animal Nature** — Fuaths enjoy the abilities of the animal to which they are most closely related. These abilities are many and varied. Aquatic fuaths have strong swimming skills and the ability to breathe underwater. There are tales of winged fuath in the Deep Dreaming, but none have been seen in other Dream Realms in living memory. Fuaths share the satyrs' speed and may move 25 yards + three times their Dexterity per turn in their chosen environment. All of them possess the satyrs' hardy constitution. Fuath may all add +1 to their Stamina, even if it brings it over the human maximum of five. Additionally, the fuaths are all predatory animals and possess sharp animal-like attributes (be they fangs, horns, claws or hooves) capable of causing Strength +1 aggravated damage.

Frailties

• **Maenad's Madness** — Born of animal instincts and the human predilection for vengeance, fuaths are all too vulnerable to fits of violent madness. These most frequently occur when the fuath is in a life and death struggle, though other provocations may also kick it off. During these episodes the fuath may be angry, frightened or filled with feral joy. She enters a blood-maddened trance state and cannot stop fighting until she either defeats or routs all her enemies or becomes Incapacitated. Unfortunately fuaths have a hard time telling friend from foe in this state (Perception + Empathy difficulty 8 to tell friend from foe for any given combat). Fuaths will never attack another of their own kind in their madness. To resist this frenzy the fuath may make a Willpower roll every turn after the first (difficulty 8). When the fuath has accumulated as many successes as she has permanent Glamour, she may break off the attack.

Stereotypes

Acheri — Avatars of sickness and corruption, they claim they are a natural force like any other. Do not be fooled. They take pleasure in their work and, unlike the forces they claim to personify, can be torn by our claws.

Aonides — Creatures of passion, there is much to be admired in the muses. Beware, however, lest they seek to manipulate you to their own ends.

Fir-bholg — Cruel and treacherous beasts. They betrayed our trust in the early years of the Miririm and raid our lands even now.

Keremet — Foul and unnatural, these shades are corpses who walk the Dreaming. Harry them from our forests for their presence is an ill omen.

Moiræ — The moiræ are to be respected, even if their pronouncements are annoyingly cryptic at times.

Naraka — Clearly dangerous, especially in their current incarnation. We know little of these creatures as yet.

Changelings — Changelings are the children of those who were our adversaries in the War of Trees, but not necessarily our enemies. Despite our old animosities, they are not all bad. If one keeps faith with you, do the same in return.

Humankind — Hateful and loving; callous, kind and indifferent. It is perhaps fitting that so many kinds of fae spring from their contradictory dreams. And they call us capricious!

Quote: *You consider yourself a predator of sorts, preying on the weak children of your own species? Come then, I am sure such a great hunter need not fear my claws.*

Keremet (Kare-ê-met)

Suspended in the final timeless moment between life and death, the keremet are not truly fae, but Enchanted humans brought into the Dreaming at the moment of their death. Those so chosen for this role are often, though not always, Dreamers or kinain. Many were known in life for their extreme wickedness or piety. Originally people of emotional extremes, the keremet have had these feelings stripped away from them in the process that gave them new life. The keremet go by many different names throughout the world.

Among the better known are the sri of Tibet, the wicked Malaysian langsuir or the Russian nalet. Keremet also stand behind the legends of the Wild Hunt. Stolen from their rightful Dán in Heaven, Hell or the Underworld, these grim shades walk the tenebrous roads between life and death on missions of dark import. Whether this is a blessing or a curse remains a matter of some disagreement, even among the keremet themselves.

Driven by a gnawing, nameless hunger, these spirits push themselves to extremes to experience the simple emotions taken for granted by humans or fae. Some of these creatures continue their past depredations, ravenous spirits ever jealous of those who can experience feelings now denied to them. Others pursue a path of redemption, hoping to repay past transgressions and free themselves from the wheel of existence. The keremet seek, above all other things, some sort of meaning to their existence, whether to punish the wicked, act as guardians of the recently dead or fulfill some unfinished personal task. (This last notion fades quickly when a keremet wraps up every possible loose end in her old life and still doesn't escape her existence.) Some keremet eventually give up trying to find any real meaning and ceaselessly pursue whatever faint pleasures they can derive in their numbed state. Those of this

bent often inflict great agony on others in order to feel any sort of emotional gratification. Conversely, some shades, realizing the value of what they once had, seek to protect both fae and human lives.

Grim and fatalistic, many of these creatures harbor secret death wishes, but the will that powers their twilight existence also hardwires them to survive — no matter the cost. Thus, many keremet court dangerous situations in the hopes of ending their existence but, when pressed, fight like mad to live. Lacking



basic emotions, the keremet try to compensate by substituting a *largely* inflexible code of honor, logic or desires. The keremets' sometimes-exaggerated sense of duty paired with their lack of emotions has made them very useful to both the fomorians and the sidhe. Without emotional consequences, the keremet under the fomorian banner made fearsome, remorseless killers. The sidhe of both Courts formed an elite oath-bound circle of keremet, nine for each Court, known as the Soul Bearers, to ferry human souls to their destination in Arcadia when the sidhe possess their bodies in the Autumn World. No sidhe who has returned to Earth remembers this. Walking the secret trods between the Dreaming and the Underworld, this small cabal alone reputedly knows the true location of Arcadia. Hardly ever known to fail, a Soul Bearer's recent loss of the human soul exchanged for Lord Harroth Balor is seen as a major calamity by the normally emotionless adhene.

Lifestyle: Trust, hope and friendship — these are things that do not come easily to the keremet. Highly solitary, they are lost in cynical thoughts most of the time. With few needs, emotional or physical, keremet rarely feel the desire to hold down a job or seek out a relationship.

Ariá

Few keremets care for the vagaries of fashion and often appear in voile resembling a tattered version of whatever clothes they wore in life.

- **Dioniae:** Since keremet rarely feel emotion of any sort, this Ariá is almost a relief for some, though for others the long forgotten emotions it brings to the forefront become a torment. In this form the keremet looks exactly as she did when she was alive, and has a strong desire to reach out and experience human sensations and relationships. Melancholia is eased in this form (reducing the difficulty penalties by one) and it is only in this form that the keremet may temporarily forget any burdens imposed by the Pact of Dagda.

- **Araminae:** In this form the keremet's skin appears pale white or ashen gray. In such a state the keremet may, or may not, pass for a living human on casual inspection — but causes disquiet in those who see him. Eyes shrink

back into the skull and gleam an unnatural yellow, blue or green. The Denizen has either a very gaunt or a bloated, corpulent appearance. Keremet in this state are better able to deal with more "everyday" concerns without the instinctual desire for sensation of the Dioniae or the rigid duty of the Apolliae Ariá.

- **Apolliae:** Keremet of this Ariá are the dreaded reapers of souls, taking no pleasure in their work but performing it with grim efficiency. Here their undead origins come most fully to the fore and they look like little more than animated corpses that exude a slaughterhouse stench. For obvious reasons their Melancholia Frailty increases in this form (difficulty penalties increase by one) and they fixate completely on accomplishing any oaths. Their eyes are shiny and black, like pieces of onyx suspended in oil. Most believe this is a result of the adhene looking into the abyss for so long.

Affinity: Actor or Prop

Birchrights

- **The Shadowed Way** — As spirits of the dead, keremet can travel the Black Path of Balor, bringing them occasionally into the Underworld. The keremet may see and communicate with the dead, but have no inherent control over them. Unlike most other Denizens, the keremet were exempted from the Silver Ban and are able to walk the Silver Path.

- **Will to Power** — As dead spirits of the Dreaming, only Glamour and their own will animate the keremet. They don't need to eat or breathe and are immune to all but the rarest chimerical diseases. They also feel little pleasure or pain. As long as the keremet has at least three points of Willpower, she has the equivalent of the Merit: Iron Will and can resist all but the harshest physical tortures. Finally, for the purpose of resisting Wound Penalties, every two points of current Willpower (rounded up) subtract one level of health penalties from any injuries against the keremet's overall health level. Thus, a keremet who is down six health levels (Crippled, -5 penalty) and has 3 or 4 Willpower will actually only have the damage penalty of someone who is Wounded (-2 penalty).

Frailties

• **The Pact of Dagda** — In return for their omission from the Silver Ban, the keremet performed a ritual that keeps them to their word when sworn by this pact. Similar in some ways to the trolls' *Bond of Duty*, this oath nullifies the keremet's "Will to Power" until the keremet is able to atone for any breach of faith (usually by fulfilling a new oath or making good on the one originally sworn). Unlike trolls, the keremet are no more honorable (or dishonorable) as a group than any other fae. They do not suffer from a broken oath any more severely than any other changeling unless they have sworn a Pact of Dagda. Most keremet avoid giving this oath when possible, but almost all Denizens know to invoke it at need.

• **Melancholia**: Although called melancholia, with all its connotations of sadness, the keremet's lack of feeling goes far beyond low spirits and hovers on the verge of being emotionally dead. The keremet's intelligence and reasoning capacities remain unimpaired, but any emotions are, at best, felt through a thick fog with the keenest emotion being a profound sense of loss. Because of this, keremet suffer a +1 difficulty to all Social rolls. Additionally, keremet have problems reading other people's emotional states (+2 difficulty to all Empathy rolls). Keremet only feel strong emotions when taking Glamour directly from a mortal Dreamer. Since keremet find it very difficult to inspire Reverie in most Dreamers, Ravaging and Reaping are the only reliable ways in which they can restore their Glamour while in the waking world. Additionally, a botch draws a point of Glamour away from the keremet and drives the Dreamer into a form of Rhapsody. Needless to say, this makes the keremet less than popular with the local fae. Some keremet become addicted to the experience.

Quote: *This is the Winter of our discontent...*

Stereotypes

Acheri — They consider themselves our "associates" for some reason. They are lucky. They perform an ordained task and their existence has some meaning (such as it is).

Aonides — Frivolous hedonists, they are among the very few who can touch us emotionally. This is to be cherished — and feared (if we could feel such).

Fir-bholg — Seeking ever to reclaim their former greatness, they have not even noticed that their race is already dead.

Fuaths — Beasts of the field, their only purpose seems to be to continue existing. It is unfortunate that they misunderstand us so.

Moirae — Listen to the ladies of Fate, for they alone hold the key to our existence.

Naraka — The pain surrounding their death and resurrection has driven them insane. Now in their rage they threaten to destroy us all. Guide them back to sanity if possible; destroy them if necessary.

Changelings — Some of us have served the sidhe and there is much to commend the trolls. The sluagh, however, are the only ones among them who might ever understand us.

Humankind — Most humans go through their lives without any appreciation for what it means to be alive. Tragic.

Moiræ (MŪOR-ay)

Originally serving as oracles and guardians of humanity, the moiræ were banished from the Autumn World despite their duty to impart the workings of Dán to humanity. In ancient Greece and Rome, they were known as the Delphic Oracles. In the darkened vaults of temples they foretold human destinies, leaving mortals to accept or fight the workings of Fate as they chose. Often their prophecies helped avert disaster. At other times, the listener's assumptions led to his own downfall. The moiræ also acted as the guardians of humanity, especially children. On the third night after a child's birth, three moiræ would come to the newborn's bedside. After eating the sacrificial meal left by the parents, these spirits would bless the child and foretell its future. The few mothers fortunate enough to witness this revelation treasured the memory as a good luck charm forever.

Unfortunately, dwelling on one's idyllic past rarely prepares one to deal with the future. Because the moiræ lied about a prophecy of great import, the Fates cursed them and flung them into the Dark Dreaming. Nobody but the moiræ and the Fates remember what this prophecy was, and the moiræ do not discuss their failings with outsiders. In the Nightmare Realms, the moiræ slowly warped and changed. Humanity forgot them, but its fascination with *Fate* never died. Catastrophes throughout history created a long train of human dreams that cried out for revenge and retribution. From quiet domestic crimes to the mass slaughter of innocents, these dreams called to the moiræ. They took on aspects of vengeful justice and retribution like the harpies of old, and swore that humanity's crimes would not go unpunished. When the sidhe came through the Mists from Arcadia, some of the moiræ attacked them, confused by the visions they saw around the nobles. They knew that the sidhe were the cause of great suffering, but whether their crimes had already taken place or were yet to come remains obscured by the Mists.

Other human longings also reached them. Increasingly, humans began to wish that they had lived their lives differently. They desired to know what life would have been like if they had made different choices. Dreams of mortals' discontent, disillusionment and their accompanying Banality horrified the moiræ. They vowed that, when they returned, they would satisfy humanity's longings and curiosities by showing them their unchosen pathways and desires in dreams.

Lifestyle: Moiræ are mostly solitary and keep to themselves except when fulfilling their functions. Because of their deep-seated need to serve humanity, they find areas of human habitation and minister to their charges' destinies and dreams until their own Dán calls them to move on to another place. If they are aware of a need for justice and retribution, they find the offender and terrorize him. If they discover a person with unfulfilled dreams or longings, they show her why she should not pursue such a future or help her realize her dreams, taking Glamour in return. Moiræ rely on their Dreamers, seeing them as exclusive property and fiercely protecting them from any perceived threat, mortal or changeling. Much of their lives are spent in the environs surrounding a given charge's dreams, though they move from person to person over time. Not mere puppets of Fate, individual moiræ interpret Fate's patternings in their own way. Some actively try to change Fate's dictates from time to time, though the penalties suffered for such hubris may be severe.

Ariá

Because of their association with the Norns, moiræ also have triune aspects that reflect all three of their purposes and physical manifestations (maiden, mother and crone). At the outset of the game, the player may choose to fit any of these aspects to any of the following Ariá he chooses. Thus, the crone might be a representative of the vengeful Dioniae or the whimsical Araminae.

- **Dioniae (Erinyes):** Moiræ are at their most terrifying in this aspect. Relentless, vengeful, and horrifying, this Ariá reflects the Erinyes (Furies) of old. Their visage becomes a hard mask of fangs and burning eyes, and some moiræ develop horns in this aspect. A wise person seeing this grotesque horror stays out of her way, gives her what she wants or runs. Showing dogged cruelty, moiræ in this Ariá enjoy the hunt, finding plenty of innocents and victims to avenge. Moiræ often give their targets nightmares which feature the offender suffering the same consequences as those he has wronged — and worse. From the moiræ's perspective, a little Ravaging afterward doesn't hurt either. Justice *will* be served and vengeance has its rewards.

- **Araminae (Whimsy):** Weird, nebulous lights surround a moiræ in Whimsy. She reflects hidden desires and untraveled roads, whether those desires be dark or light. Temptress, teacher or warder, she shows people what their lives could have been, or could still be, had they made certain decisions, encouraging them to follow

their Dán. A moiræ following this drive also explores unfulfilled dreams in her target's psyche, sometimes drawing them out and fulfilling them, sometimes suppressing and discouraging them. Giving mortals what they want in their dreams can be very inspiring or debilitating, depending on the mortal.

- **Apolliae (Oracle):** This aspect is the oldest and original face of the moiræ before they were further changed by mankind's dreams. Typically, the moiræ appears as a veiled or blindfolded oracle in a white robe, or as an angel of light. Moiræ following this Ariá are usually

at their most benevolent. They bring luck and hope and, even if paired with an otherwise malignant Legacy, they usually believe themselves to have (ultimately) good intentions. When a moiræ senses great Dán for a person, she may visit him in his dreams to give him guidance or to rescue him from the banal rut in which he's been living. A moiræ in this aspect instills in the one she visits the belief that she won't harm him — this time around.

Affinity: Actor or Fae

BIRTHRIGHTS

- **Aural Perception** — The moiræ retain this ability from the Mythic Age when they served primarily as oracles to both fae and humanity. Moiræ can see a person's Dán as ethereal images swirling around his head or body. These images reveal what the individual is fated to do, what he has done or what larger connection he may have in the tapestry. Some people have more to do with Dán than others, and they aren't always the most visible people in society. An "average person" may have more influence in the world than an important leader. These images do not reveal all; they merely give clues. Dán is not a chain of predestined events and can change. This Birthright is always in effect at a low level and can be somewhat disorienting in a room full of people. To get anything useful, the player must spend a point of Glamour and roll her character's current Glamour (difficulty 7). If successful, she may divine one "snap-shot" image pertaining to the person's past or future actions per success. This Birthright may be



used on any given target only once a scene. Because the Norns gave them free will, they also made it difficult for the moiræ to predict their own individual fates with this Birthright (-3 penalty to any attempt to do so). Finally, because of their connection to Fate, moiræ gain an additional die to their dice pool for casting any Soothsayer cantrip.

• **Fata** — Serving such powerful creatures as the Three Fates has its perks. The moiræ enjoy an exemption from the Silver Ban and may walk the Silver Path. Few question Fate's prerogatives; through ancient pacts the Dreaming exacts vengeance against any that interfere with its messengers. The punishment usually takes the form of the Flaw: Cursed and varies in severity and duration depending on how touched by Fate the perpetrator is and the seriousness of the crime. Minor interference such as extreme disrespect exacts only a minor penalty (a 1 point Curse for a full day). Imprisoning, badly wounding or otherwise hindering a moiræ (while she is on a mission) earns a 2 or 3 point Curse until she is released or otherwise escapes. Killing a moiræ while she is "off-duty" may result in a 4 point Curse for a year or more. Killing one while she is on a mission for the Norns may result in a 5 point Curse and may last forever. Alternate punishments may result in the offender temporarily or permanently gaining the Flaws: Nightmare and/or Chimerical Magnet. This Birthright applies only so long as the moiræ remains a neutral messenger, however. The moiræ annuls this pact by attacking or otherwise *directly* damaging someone, either physically or with Arts. Lastly, because of their connection with the Wyrd or Fate, moiræ have -1 difficulty when Calling Upon the Wyrd.

Frailties

• **Superstition** — Creatures of Fate, the moiræ are more susceptible to some of its whims, including human superstition. They must avoid nearly all things that purportedly bring "bad luck" or suffer Nightmares (see **Changeling: The Dreaming**). This taboo includes minor superstitions such as stepping on cracks in the sidewalk or a black cat crossing her path as well as major transgressions of fortune such as taking a stone from a sacred island. If a locale has a "bad luck" legend attached to it, moiræ will be forced to observe it or suffer the consequences. Storytellers are encouraged to be creative. Moiræ can absolve themselves of Nightmares or lessen the severity by reversing what they have done or atoning (subject to Storyteller discretion). In addition, any violation of a Geas, Ban or other oath by a moiræ incurs an

extra die of intensity to the usual penalty. Note that the most common wielders of Sovereign, the sidhe, have their own traditions against manipulating Fate in such a manner. Moiræ forced to perform taboo actions either through mental manipulation or physical coercion have only half as difficult a time reversing it, while those who forced them to do so may be cursed as per the Fata birthright.

Stereotypes

Acheri — A necessary evil. They are a reflection of what is.

Aonides — Contemptible hedonists, they steal our Dreamers for their own worthless ends!

Fir-bholg — Some are worthy and some are not.

Fuaths — Many see them as mindless animals, but they will play a vital role in the final fate of the Dreaming. Treat them with respect.

Keremet — Many of these were taken by our hands; they reap what they have sown. They had best not give us cause to elaborate on the lesson.

Naraka — They, too, know the meaning of vengeance, but their current fallen state places their collective destiny beyond our sight for the time being (though individuals are not hard to read). We must watch them carefully.

Changelings — Some respect the prerogatives of Dán; others shall suffer for their iniquities. The sidhe, in particular, think they are the shuttles in the loom of Fate's tapestry. They do not control us and have much for which to answer.

Humankind — Our charges have been separated from us for too long! See how they languish without our guidance. We have a duty to help them untangle the mess they have made for themselves.

Quote: *We are vengeance and our teachings are often painful. Remember that when next you seek gratification of your basest desires.*

Naraka (NAU-RA-KAH)

In the summer of 1999 the Dreaming surrounding Bangladesh nearly disappeared, destroyed by fire from the sky. As the dust settled, the naraka entered the Autumn World. Like all children, the first thing they beheld was their mother: Kali the Hindu goddess of destruction. The scent of the destroyer lay thick in the air. Seeing the carnage, Kali's newly born offspring understood their nature. Their bodies existed as naked nightmares, wandering an uninhabited wasteland. At first they had no knowledge of Banality's chill as they wandered beneath Samvarta, the Doomsday Cloud; corpses and ruins hold no disbelief. They didn't remember what the land looked like before their mother shaped it into her image. Vaguely, they felt their very existence was a legacy of the fears and beliefs of what had once existed. Naraka have no memories before their "birth." They don't remember what they came from, and this frightens and angers them. Many naraka are obsessed with learning the mythology of the culture that spawned them to regain some sense of identity.

Naraka are paradoxically both deadly and childlike. Their nightmare side is almost innocent in its lack of experience. Although they run through the mundane motions of life, the world seems new and strange to them. Flavor, colors and textures fill them with child-like wonder. Likewise they become very frustrated about seemingly trivial things. Thus, while they are the embodiment of destruction, they may also find other beings, places and objects fascinating or enjoy themselves with abandon at a party before returning to their usual pursuits. They interact with society to learn more of their probable foes and the way the world works. They're like the child who smiles at the antics of ants before becoming bored and crushing them.

The naraka exist in a transitional state. Driven to stop the madness from which they sprang, they know they were born to be destroyers, but are often unsure who or what to rend. An angry, violated adhene, they seek to discover who to blame for their agonized birth and strike out against the whole world in their fear and hatred. Whoever harnesses their destructive energies against his foes may triumph, but reap the whirlwind himself as well.

Lifestyle: Naraka appear lost in the mortal world. They find things strange and frustrating or compellingly interesting (for a brief time). Born in chaos, they despise structure and order, finding the rules and traditions of the Autumn World restricting. They don't work or obey

rules. Their outlook combines anarchy with a splash of nihilism. They despise human weakness. To naraka, death and destruction are the redeeming qualities of the Autumn World, valuing the process of change over the lasting values of static form and shape.

Ariá

In all of their Ariá naraka are sleek and mesmerizing. They sport trim dark forms and tend toward light colored hair. Their glowing red or white eyes evince no discernible pupils. Unlike some fae, they have rounded human ears, instead of pointed "elf-like" ones. During war they paint their bodies with Sanskrit sigils of destruction, change and chaos. Their skins change from deep brown to dark purple depending on their current Ariá. When provoked or involved in violence, they can manifest multiple arms. The extra limbs are not only intimidating, but also make the naraka nearly as lethal as Kali herself.

- **Dioniae:** This Ariá is called the Aditi Ariá or "dream form." In this state naraka are the most violent, volatile and primitive. They feel no compassion or honor and make fearsome assassins.

- **Araminae:** In the Ariá called the Prajapati Ariá or "mortal" form, naraka become moody and depressed. They can be angered, but are more prone to fits of melancholy as they try to remember their origins. Conversely, they experience more joy and passion as they reach greater balance. Naraka appreciate aesthetic beauty in this form.

- **Apolliae:** In the Ariá known as the Brihaspati Ariá or "living dream form," naraka are calm, calculating and unemotional — a state they seek to achieve. In this form, naraka never show any emotion unless some cantrip or other power magically implants the feeling in them.

Affinity: Fae or Scene

Birchrights

- **Wrath of Kali Ma** — Naraka may issue searing flames from their mouths. The player rolls a number of dice equal to the character's current Glamour (difficulty 7). The attack has a range of one meter, does one level of nonaggravated damage per success and can be dodged as normal. It costs one point of Glamour to perform. This Birchright also confers a partial immunity to fire. Fire damage against naraka is not aggravated and they are at -1 difficulty to soak.

- **Arms of Ravana** — This Birchright allow the naraka to manifest multiple arms for combat or intimidation. The extra appendages emerge from the naraka's

side, the process taking one combat turn. The player rolls dice equal to his current Glamour (difficulty 7), with the number of arms manifested equal to the number of successes rolled. Each success also adds one extra die to Melee or Brawl rolls or may add an extra physical action for every additional pair of arms (rounded up). This Birthright costs one Glamour to invoke and lasts one turn per success or until the naraka decides to revert to her original form, whichever comes first.

Frailty

- **Curse of Shiva** — The naraka have a fatal weakness: Music. In the presence of live music a naraka must drop what she is doing and dance, unless she rolls her Willpower (difficulty varies based on the performer's skill). Successes indicate how many turns the character can go without succumbing to the effects of this Frailty. Alternatively a naraka can spend a temporary Willpower to ignore this Frailty. Generally speaking, when naraka aren't in life-threatening situations, they go ahead and dance.

- **Selective Possession** — The naraka are limited by Geas and custom as to whom they can possess. By holy law, no matter what form of possession the naraka chooses to use, he may only inhabit the body of someone of the Hindu faith. Though hardly a disadvantage in India or large cosmopolitan cities, it can be daunting in other regions. The naraka can use other methods of interacting with the mundane world without possession. Additionally, because of their genesis, no naraka may start the game with the Background: Remembrance.

Quote: *These are your last hours, for we have come among you bringing the dance of destruction to your world.*

Stereotypes

Acheri — Like us, they often leave a wake of death. We admire their potential to bring radical change with their mere presence. We are creatures of war; they of pestilence. We gladly ride alongside them to change this world.

Aonides — The aonides have much they can teach us. They are wisest in the ways of man and have the capacity to manipulate humans into self-destructive behavior. Like changelings, the aonides inspire humanity, though their gift pushes the recipient to the brink of madness.

Fir-bholg — Angry creatures, their understanding of the natural aspects of this world are great, but they are as ignorant of humanity as we are. They make grandiose claims about ancient times, but their past does not interest us. The fir-bholg believe that some great calamity will soon consume the Autumn Lands. Perhaps we are that cataclysm.

Fuaths — As chaotic and vengeful as we are. Perhaps it would be wise to include them in our plans to tear the Autumn World to shreds. Their magic would greatly augment our battle prowess.

Keremet — They are human souls lost in the Dreaming, yet counted the most inhuman of the adhene.

Moirae — The Moirae are among the most frightening Denizens. They possess a strong connection to the Wyrd, which makes our nightmare powers real in this world. Unfortunately, they seek to protect humanity. This puts them in direct conflict with our goal to make of the Autumn World a clean slate.

Changelings — Some of them are of right mind, mostly those of the Unseelie variety. The Seelie have a deluded concept that the Dreaming is nothing without human imagination. Yet, they claim to be older than the tribes of man. How can this be? Do the animals and trees not dream? We should make alliances with Unseelie who can aid us in our quest to stop humanity's madness. We will deal with the interfering Seelie accordingly.

Humankind — Despised, foolish weaklings! Learn what you can of them and their plans. Kill them when you can, but without being caught. The rules and structures with which they blight their world are why it is called the "Autumn Lands." They have no respect for the beauty and creativity of chaos. Our duty calls us to show them the error of their ways.





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CHAPTER FOUR: BUILDING THE PERFECT BEAST

This chapter provides information for creating Dark-kn player characters and Storyteller characters. Included here is a section on new Abilities, Backgrounds, Merits and Flaws and three new Arts.

Character Creation

Many of the rules for creating **Denizens** characters are similar to those found in **Changeling: The Dreaming**. These rules are recapped and expanded here. The initial decision that a player must make about her character is to decide just who that character is. What does

he look like? Why is she undertaking the near suicidal dangers inherent to visiting this world of fools? A general mental picture should suffice at this point; most people find that the character grows more real as the creation process progresses. As in the other Storyteller games, the process of creating a character revolves in large part around applying the points in a way that defines the character's basic Attributes and Abilities. Is the character strong or weak? Intelligent? Beautiful? What are her skills? Is she a good fighter? Perhaps she's artistic or social? All of the details needed are listed on the chart below.

CHARACTER CREATION CHART

• Step One: Character Concept

Who are you? Choose Adhene, Starting Ariá, Legacy and Concept.

Adhene: To what Denizen race do you belong?

Ariá: What are your character's primary, secondary and tertiary forms? These also affect the character's two beginning Tempers: Glamour and Willpower. Denizens don't begin the game with the third Temper — Banality.

Legacy: What is your character's personality for each Ariá?

Concept: Who are you? What defines your basic character concept? Usually a two or three word summation will suffice (i.e.; "Fuath Avenger").

• Step Two: What are your basic Attributes?

Prioritize your three categories: Primary, secondary and tertiary classes (7/5/3). Apply these as desired to the three categories below.

Choose Physical Traits: Strength, Dexterity, Stamina

Choose Social Traits: Charisma, Manipulation, Appearance

Choose Mental Traits: Perception, Intelligence, Wits

• Step Three: Select Abilities

Prioritize your three categories: Primary, secondary and tertiary classes (13/9/5). Apply these as desired to the three categories below.

Choose Talents: Your innate, intuitive abilities.

Choose Skills: Your trained abilities.

Choose Knowledges: Abilities you study and memorize.

• Step Four: Select Advantages

Choose Backgrounds: 5

Choose Arts: 3

Choose Realms: 5

• Step Five: Final Touches

Record beginning Glamour and Willpower as determined by your Ariá.

Record adhene Birthrights and Frailties.

Spend freebie points (15). As per the costs in Changeling.

Choose Merits and Flaws.

New Abilities

As a rule Denizens who are not "Evanescent" don't have much knowledge of the waking world, its customs, traditions and Autumn sciences. Beginning Denizen characters who have just come through the Mists into this world are limited to one level in any highly technical or "Autumn specific" Abilities. This list includes: Human Bureaucracy, Streetwise, Drive, Firearms, Security (at least that involving technological devices), Computer, Human Law, Autumn Lore, Medicine or any of the Autumn Sciences (Biology, Psychology etc.). Denizens may start with a little information simply because *some* knowledge trickles into the Dreaming. Such information is rarely complete enough to give a Dark-kin anything but the most basic understanding of a given subject. Those players who wish to lift this cap may do so by purchasing the Merit: Evanescence.

New Knowledges

Autumn Lore

Humans are strange. Their actions are often a complete mystery, even to their own kind. All Denizens, no matter how deep in the Dreaming they originally lived, have *some* knowledge of human interaction. The Dreaming is, after all, made up of human thoughts. Nevertheless, this garbled knowledge is almost useless in day to day life without Autumn Lore. A fir-bholg might wonder why people use a fork when eating when a dagger does just as well. A note on language: A Denizen knows his own native tongue and "impresses" on the dominant language in whatever part of the waking world he first visits. Human culture includes its languages and at the fourth and fifth levels of this Knowledge, the Denizen also learns a foreign language with each new level (and brief immersion in its culture). The Storyteller should note that this Knowledge doesn't confer any specific realm of knowledge, but is more of a generalized 101 course on being a human being. Denizens may not buy this Knowledge above one dot at the beginning of the game unless they purchase the Merit: Evanescence. Storytellers who wish to begin the game with characters already versed in human ways may choose to give one or two levels of this Knowledge to players for free.

• **Student:** Freak. "Why-you-are-staring? Me am human-ish."

•• **Journeyman:** Outsider. "Excuse me, I am a stranger here. How do I use this teleradiophone device?"

- **Scholar:** Human. You easily pass for human, as long as people don't look too carefully.
- **Expert:** All too human. You fit right in, perhaps a little *too* well for your cousins back in the Dreaming.
- **Master:** More human than human. You make other humans feel like maybe *its they* who don't belong.

Changeling Lore

Kithain are strange and alien to most Denizens. Those with this Ability have made it a point to study their old adversaries. This gives general knowledge concerning which kith is which and the ability to predict how they might behave in certain situations. At higher levels the Denizen is privy to some of their innermost secrets. Since it's impossible to learn everything about the Kithain without observing them in the Autumn Realms, Denizens may not buy this Knowledge above two levels at the beginning of the game unless they purchase the Merit: *Evanescent*.

- **Student:** You can tell the difference between a boggan and a troll.
- **Journeyman:** You can tell the difference between House Gwydion and House Balor.
- **Scholar:** You can tell the difference between House Eiluned and House Ailil.
- **Expert:** The antics of the pooka make some sense to you.
- **Master:** You are more at home among the changelings than among your own kind.

Denizen Lore

Denizens are often as strange to each other as they are to the Kithain. Separated by vast stretches of time and geography in the Dreaming, they often only remember each other as myths. A fir-bholg from a backwater part of the Dreaming may be just as surprised to see a naraka in the Autumn World as a changeling, vampire or insurance salesman. Denizens with this Knowledge keep track of their old allies. Denizens without this Ability know only the everyday facts about their own adhene and rumors about neighboring races.

- **Student:** You are privy to who hates whom within your own tribe.
- **Journeyman:** You know of the habits and whereabouts of neighboring tribes.
- **Scholar:** You know some details about all the adhene listed in this book (though some details may be wrong).

- **Expert:** You have experience with all the adhene listed in this book.
- **Master:** You have a complete understanding of the cultural habits of all the best known adhene.

New Merits & Flaws

There are numerous Merits & Flaws listed in *Changeling: The Dreaming* and other sourcebooks, most of which are appropriate for Denizens. Storytellers should note that some players attempt to use Flaws to "min-max" their characters, using the points to buy Merits or to bump up their Arts to an unwanted degree. This practice is rendered all the worse if the player has no intention of roleplaying, or the Storyteller of enforcing, these Flaws. Many Storytellers find it useful to limit the number of both Merits and Flaws allowed at the game's outset (a maximum of 3, 5 or 7 points accommodate a range of styles). The best way to limit the abuse of the Flaw system is for Storytellers to enforce Flaws in play. Not only discouraging min-maxing, properly playing Flaws leads to interesting roleplaying opportunities. The Storyteller has the final word on which Merits and Flaws he permits in his game.

Merits

Aura of Fear (2 point Merit)

Many Denizens threaten by their very presence, but you take this to a preternatural extreme. By spending a point of Glamour you exude an air of menace that may stop the boldest creatures in their tracks. Anyone who wishes to attack or even insult you must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 7) before doing so.

Banality Resistance (3 point Merit)

Even though you have not undergone the Changeling Way Ritual, you are more resistant to gaining Banality in whatever form you take. You no longer automatically gain Banality while in Phantom Form or upon possessing a human. Your rate of Banality accrual is no faster than that of the average changeling.

Change Ariá (3 point Merit)

Unlike most Denizens you have voluntary control over when you change your Ariá. Changes of this nature still affect both your physical appearance and your emotional state. Use of this Merit requires one point of Willpower.

Evanescent (2-3 point Merit)

Most Dark-kin were locked out of the Autumn World for thousands of years; they know next to nothing about human affairs or the secret dangers which await in its Banality choked streets. Even most aonides and moiræ spend more time in the Dreaming than in the waking realms. Some Denizens have lurked among humanity for years and are well versed in its ways. Characters who take this Merit are familiar with the various forms of possession. They may buy any of the curtailed Abilities up to their maximum extent (though normal **Changeling** rules still apply to Abilities bought over three points at the beginning of a game) and are experienced in the most basic of human interactions (anything more requires the Autumn Lore Knowledge). Those adhere not included in the Silver Ban (aonides, keremet and moiræ) pay only two points for this Merit, while any others pay three. Evanescents begin the game with two permanent points of Banality and are, hence, able to pass through the Meridianus without hindrance. Storytellers who wish to begin the game with characters already versed in human ways may choose to give this Merit to players for free.

Human Shell (4 point Merit)

You woke up on the other side of the Mists with a surprise. Your fae mien was clothed in a fully functional human form. This body is roughly the same size as your faerie mien and makes you look entirely human. It may have been a gift from the Norns, you may have stolen it, entered a pact with the former owner or maybe your great-great grandfather had it "on ice" since the Tessarakonta for just such an occasion. Having more than five dots in any Attribute is still a violation of reality in the Autumn Realm. The body in question may not exceed your Physical Attributes in the Dreaming, though you may move the numbers around. You, of course, retain your own Mental Attributes, Charisma and Manipulation. Also, you now share the Banality inherent in such a form. You have a beginning Banality rating of two.



Flaws

Anachronism (4 point Flaw)

There is something of a time lag in the Dreaming, explaining why ancient dreams still hold such power and why modern sensibilities have not monopolized the Dreamscape. Not only are you unfamiliar with the modern human world, but you're unwilling or unable to learn. Perhaps you merely think the old ways are best or perhaps you are just too strongly attached to dreams of the past. In any case, you must spend double the experience points to buy any "modern" Abilities, no matter how long you have been in the Waking. This Flaw may not be taken by *naraka*.

Banality Magnet (4 point Flaw)

Most Denizens have a high susceptibility to Banality, but you have it worse than most. Maybe your family was cursed by the Tuatha dé Danaan, or maybe you are just easily addicted to beer and television. You attract twice the Banality of other Denizens and even in forms that don't normally attract Banality you accrue one point each day you fail to gain one success on a Glamour roll (difficulty equal to the local Banality). This Flaw may create great difficulties for a beginning character and the player should consider things carefully before taking it.

Banished (2/4/6 point Flaw)

Because of some crime, real or imagined, you have been banished from your particular *adhene*. This Flaw has three different degrees of seriousness. Those with a two point Flaw have been banished but there is some hope of return. Perhaps you have "merely" to fulfill some nearly impossible task in the Waking first. This level Flaw may or may not be enforced by any magic. With a four point Flaw, not only have you been banished, but you wear some mark that allows your entire *adhene* to recognize you as an outcast. You may never return to any area inhabited by your people and even those of your race in the waking world may try to make your life miserable. Finally, the six-point version of this Flaw means that a powerful *Geas* has exiled you from the Dreaming. This does not necessarily mean that you can never go into the Dream Realms, but only powerful magic will allow you temporary entry. (You may still enter freeholds in the Autumn World, however.) Further, not only are you banished, but actively hunted. Your fellow *adhene* will likely kill you on sight (or try to capture you for a reward)

and even changelings and other *adhene* look askance at you.

Blackmailed (1-2 point Flaw)

There is something in your past you don't want to come to light and someone knows it. This person (or organization) demands outrageous sums of money or services and sensitive information in return for silence. This is a 1 point Flaw if the secret is a relatively minor one that would merely cause great embarrassment or personal inconvenience if revealed. A 2 point Flaw indicates a much more dangerous piece of information. Killing the blackmailer will probably only make matters worse, but if the player is sufficiently clever about turning the tables on the blackmailer (i.e. finding out one of his dark secrets) the Storyteller may decrease, or eliminate, this Flaw — at least temporarily.

Cochaid's Curse (3 point Flaw)

Even more than usual, when possessing a human body you are bound to your host's psyche and must work toward any goals that she pursued before you possessed her. This is not absolute — you can also pursue your own agenda — but unless you do something to substantively further her welfare or desires (Storyteller's decision), you lose a point of Willpower per day no matter what method of possession you use. You cannot regain any Willpower until you have been out of the body for 24 hours.

Jack o' Will (3 point Flaw)

The heady rush of taking Glamour directly from a human vessel can be too much for some Denizens to resist. You instantly became addicted to Ravaging, making you quite unpopular with the local Kithain. Even your fellow Denizens soon realized that you are sucking up more Glamour than your fair share. Further, no individual epiphany matches your memories of your earliest Ravaging experiences; you require more and more sensation to sate your desires, destroying more lives in your wake. Whenever confronted with a human Dreamer of any strength, you must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 9) or spend all your energies toward being able to Ravage him. You do not even care if this leads to a net increase in your Glamour; it's the experience you crave. Led to greater and greater perversions, you take absurd risks to feed your addiction. Your *Dioniae Ariá* gains +2 Willpower in all contests to assume dominance of your psyche and you may not buy the Merit: Change *Ariá*.

This is a pitiful state for a Denizen. If you work at it you may eventually free yourself of this addiction. Alternatively, local changelings may hunt you down like the mad dog you are.

Outcast (2 point Flaw)

Unlike the banished, you are still nominally a part of your adhene's culture, but occupy its very lowest rung. You may be a bottom-feeder at the fringes of a fir-bholg army, a Pariah among the naraka or the worst sort of kitsch artist among the muses. Those above you think little of insulting or demeaning you and your legal status among your own kind is debatable, though they rarely attack you outright. Other Dark-kin may take pity on you, but are likely to see you as inconsequential.

Paranoia (2 point Flaw)

Coming through the Mists wasn't easy for you. You are suspicious of everything and everybody. These humans are everywhere and possess strange and provocative powers. No wonder they're destroying the Dreaming so easily — it's a plot! The changelings are in on it too, turning themselves into some sort of demi-humans to further the cause of Banality. You'd call your friends for help, but what if they're in on it too? Characters with this Flaw are at +1 difficulty to all Social rolls.

Backgrounds

Denizens may take any Backgrounds changelings have, though the Storyteller should limit the Dreamers and Autumn World Resources Backgrounds to one point unless the player buys the Merit: Evanescent. This section presents one new Background (Destiny) and details the Denizen version of the Title Background.

Destiny

Dán is the guiding force in the tapestry of life. Neither predestination nor free will, it paradoxically combines the two. This Background reflects your character's relative importance in the tapestry. He may be slated for greatness or a horrible demise, but his is certain to be a tale that goes down into legend. One should keep in mind that those who are greatest are not always found in court or with a title. Sometimes the little things that your character does can have long lasting influence on what he encounters later down the road.

This Background doesn't necessarily grant special privileges; it must be roleplayed. You and your Storyteller should decide some of the things your Dán will entail before you begin your chronicle. Your character might be

a servant of the Norns or someone prophesied to prevent a grave disaster. You are only guaranteed that you won't die before achieving some form of greatness, but your death itself may fulfill this Dán. Typically, those with this Trait attract soothsayers and moiræ. Their lives roller-coaster through glorious successes and crushing defeats. The kiss of Fate is both a blessing and a curse, but always a terrible burden.

- **Basic:** You will achieve at least one important quest.
- **Minor:** Moiræ make mild obeisance to you in the streets.
- **Useful:** You are in some way attached to one or more legendary Treasures.
- **Significant:** Soothsayers and prophets begin to rave whenever you enter the room.
- **Incredible:** You have met the Norns personally, and you could probably get them to do some of the things that you ask... for a price.

Title

Unless this Background is purchased, the Denizen is assumed to be of the lowest rank in whatever form of hierarchy her adhene observes. Of course some adhenes more strictly enforce these distinctions than others and some hardly observe such distinctions at all. Most Denizens have little cause to obey the strictures of another adhene's noble class. The advantages of this Background among foreign adhene is, then, more one of respect than obedience. Of course noble rank may make the character a target for assassination or kidnapping for ransom. Rank and title mean little to the individualistic acheri and the keremet. The aonides may appreciate the trappings of power, but theirs is a loose-knit meritocracy based on arts inspired.

Rank is most important among the fir-bholg and fuaths (a rough tribal ranking), the moiræ (a hierarchy of priests and priestesses) and the naraka who follow a caste system *similar* to that found in India (the naraka Vedic aesthetic has moved some of the castes around). If a member of these adhenes does not buy this Background, he is assumed to be of the lowest rank or caste possible without being an outcast. The ranks given here represent the most commonly acknowledged hierarchies, but are not consistent throughout the Dreaming.

- **Novice:** A veteran warrior or cardace (fir-bholg or fuath), a novitiate among the moiræ, a Vaishya of the naraka.

•• **Low Rank:** A war-party leader/sergeant-at-arms (fir-bholg or fuath), a monk among the moiræ, a Shudra of the naraka.

••• **Medium Rank:** A knight (fir-bholg or fuath), a priestess among the moiræ, a low Kshatriya of the naraka.

A Note on Caste

The naraka place a hierarchical value on different types of professions, thus a character buying a certain caste should buy at least some of the skills that would logically accompany it. Naraka castes are, from lowest to highest: Vaishya (traders and cultivators), Shudra (artisans), Kshatriya (warriors or political operatives) and Brahmin (priesthood). Characters who wish to play a member of the Pariah or "untouchable" caste should buy the Flaw: Out-cast.

•••• **High Rank:** A tribal chieftain or war-priestess (fir-bholg or fuath), a high priestess among the moiræ, a high Kshatriya or low Brahmin of the naraka.

••••• **Command Staff:** Chieftain of a tribal nation or high war-priestess (fir-bholg or fuath), a grand-matriarch among the moiræ, a high Brahmin of the naraka.

New Arts

While these are Arts mostly known among Denizens, certain changelings might be able to learn them if they can find a willing teacher.



The Autumn Way

Despite the confusion sometimes caused by its name, this Art has little to do with Banality. It is, simply, an

ancient Art, which has long allowed some the fae to interact with the mundane world without resorting to the extremes of the Changeling Way Ritual. This Art is rarely possessed by either changelings or Denizens, neither of whom have needed it much over the Miririm. Mainly practiced by the muses and other Evanescent Denizens, it has recently become quite the bargaining chip.

Attribute: Manipulation

☉ Insufflation (Complex Possession)

The easiest method of interacting with the Autumn World, this cantrip involves the active possession of a non-sleeping human. Unlike Simple Possession, Insufflation allows the Denizen to take physical form in the human world without the debilitating accrual of Banality inherent to Simple Possession. Denizens who seek to take human form must expend a point of Glamour and make a Willpower roll (difficulty equal to the target's Willpower or inherent Banality, whichever is higher). For each success the Denizen may occupy the target for a full day. The Denizen may automatically add to this amount of time by spending additional Glamour, each point buying an amount of time equal to the first. The dangers to this are considerably less than those encountered in Simple Possession; no matter how long the Denizen possesses the person, he only gains one temporary point of Banality (unless encountering or engaging in high Banality situations).

The Denizen takes on the Physical Attributes and Appearance of the person he possesses while maintaining his own Mental Attributes, Charisma and Manipulation. This ability takes a full turn to activate and only works on unenlightened humans, not prodigals or humans with Awakened avatars (i.e., mages).

Insufflation confers fragmented memories (but no Abilities) from the possessed person's life, thus making it possible to pull off a convincing masquerade against those who know the person well, but not easy. As with Simple Possession, the Denizen in this state can use any of his Arts, common voile or chimerical weapons, but cannot call upon any special Treasures. The Denizen may Enchant mortals while in this state but may not call upon the Wyrd. Possessed humans may remember their actions while under this power (subject to the Mists) and may have a vague notion of an alien presence.

Type: Chimerical

Manifestation

With this cantrip the Denizen is able to fully manifest his true form in the Autumn World. While this cantrip is in effect the Denizen has all the physical presence and Banality resistance of the changelings. As with the Kithain, the Denizen possesses a faerie and a human mien, the first of which is only visible to those with faerie sight. With Manifestation the Denizen can use any of his Arts, chimerical weapons or Treasures. The Denizen may Enchant mortals and call upon the Wyrð. This cantrip costs one point of Glamour to cast, requires a roll against the Denizen's permanent Glamour (difficulty 5) and lasts for one week per success.

Type: Wyrð

Zeitgeist

Strangers to the Autumn World, some Dark-kin have neither the time nor the inclination to learn all its subtleties. Hundreds of languages, thousand of local customs! Who can be bothered? Zeitgeist smoothes over the problems encountered by strangers in a strange land. It gives the Denizen temporary knowledge of the local language, helps him understand local customs and cultures, and minimizes Social penalties to -1 die (unless the Denizen does something violent or outrageous; this does not include Social penalties stemming from a Denizen's Flaws or Frailties). The local population might realize the Denizen is a stranger, but unless truly suspicious or insular, they won't go out of their way to bother him. This cantrip costs one point of Glamour. The Denizen makes a Manipulation + Streetwise roll (difficulty 6). The cantrip lasts one day per success.

Type: Chimerical

Dagda's Boon (Walk the Silver Path)

The Tuatha dé Danaan's magic has weakened in recent centuries and even they could not foresee all possibilities. During the Miririm a fir-bholg sorcerer developed a cantrip by which Denizens could disguise their mystic "signature" from the Silver Ban. Cynically dubbed "Dagda's Boon," the cantrip spread to other adhene, though it isn't commonly known. Those who use it may walk the Silver Path without Kithain permission. This cantrip also makes its caster partially "transparent" to Soothsay, the divining powers of the moiræ and any spells to detect fomorian taint. The number of successes rolled on this cantrip may automatically be used as a dice pool to contest any such spells. The Denizen casting this cantrip must spend a point of Glamour and make a roll against her permanent Glamour. The cantrip lasts one day for every success.

Type: Chimerical

Reality's Horror

A power said to be wielded by Ravana himself, this potent cantrip allows its wielder to bring aspects of the Dreaming into the mundane world, casting them directly into the mind of a target without the need for Enchantment. The target of these chimeras believes they are real; hallucinatory fire may burn him and an illusory wall can block him. This cantrip affects only one person at a time. Other people can try to convince the target that his terrors aren't real, but he won't believe them unless he achieves at least two successes on a Willpower roll (difficulty 9). Even then, he has trouble ignoring the effects and is at -3 to all actions. Most frequently wielded by Denizens and some Kithain of the Unseelie Court, it is typically shunned by outsiders as nothing more than a sophisticated "illusion."

Reality's Horror costs one point of both Glamour and Willpower to set in motion and lasts for an entire scene. If the Denizen seeks to hurt her victim, her player must roll Manipulation + Realm (difficulty equals the victim's permanent Banality or Willpower, whichever is higher). Each success inflicts one level of damage. If the caster wishes to cause less damage she must announce a maximum damage before the roll. This power is purely chimerical and cannot actually kill its victims, at least in the mundane world (Although a target with a heart condition could die from fright or one might be convinced to overlook something harmful, such as a nearby cliff). Usually a victim "killed" by an illusory attack just loses consciousness. All injuries disappear on mundane or prodigal targets once they awaken or are convinced that they weren't really harmed.

Type: Chimerical



Discord

Some say the Dark-kin learn Discord in their sleep, taught by the ancient Dragon Ouroborous. This legend could be just an intimidation tactic the naraka made up to fit their dark mysticism. However, some sidhe believe that this same mythical creature endows the fae with the Dragon's Ire; Discord is undeniably an Art of war. Discord is brutal and effective in incapacitating, crippling or slaying an opponent. Naraka most commonly wield this Art, which adds to the ambiguity of its origin, but it is sometimes practiced by other adhene. Few changelings

have ever seen anything like it. If the Denizen augments this Art with others such as Wayfare and Primal, he may even go toe to toe with powerful prodigals.

Attribute: Dexterity

☉ House of Mirrors

This cantrip makes a creepy distraction tactic by creating multiple chimerical images. These images are harmless and cannot attack anyone, but in a combat situation opponents take some time to figure out which Denizen (or changeling) is the right one to hit amid shifting shadows and whirling half-seen images. Some may be mirror copies of the caster, while others consist of moving light and shadow seen from the corner of the eye that are too threatening to ignore.

System: The Realm used determines what the images distract. This Art costs one point of Glamour. Each chimerical image is animated and moves around in a confusing, menacing manner. Used in conjunction with the Actor Realm, this cantrip affects human viewers while the Prop Realm is necessary to fool a camera. The number of successes rolled (difficulty 7) dictate how many images form. For each image created, the target of the cantrip has a + 1 difficulty to Initiative rolls in combat, and to all Wits related rolls when not in a combat situation. It lasts one turn per success.

Type: Chimerical

☹☹ Hermes' Fleetness

Hermes' Fleetness increases the reflexes and agility of a target, making attempts to dodge blows easier.

System: When Hermes' Fleetness is cast, the character must spend one temporary Glamour. The character that cast Hermes' Fleetness receives a -1 difficulty modifier on Dodge rolls for each success. This Art cannot lower dodge difficulties below three. This effect lasts for one turn per success.

Type: Chimerical

☹☹☹ Armilustra

This cantrip can augment a weapon (or bare hands) to do aggravated damage. Sometimes called "Myth-Bane" it is not only as potent as iron to the fae, but also lethal to prodigals. The weapon so enchanted takes on a fiery glow.

System: The Realm used determines what delivers the sting of the Myth-Bane. Thus, the Prop Realm would enchant a sword while the Fae Realm would effect the attacker's fists and the Nature Realm would enchant a rose's thorns or cat's claws. One point of temporary

Glamour must be spent to cast the Armilustra cantrip. The number of successes rolled (difficulty 6) determine how many "charges" of aggravated wounding potential the cantrip has until it needs to be cast again. For example, if cast on a sword, four successes would indicate that the enhanced weapon could do four levels of aggravated damage before becoming a normal sword again. The amount of aggravated damage cannot exceed the weapon dice rolled on any given attack.

Type: Wyrd

☹☹☹☹ Whirling Dervish

This cantrip adds great accuracy in battle due to speed and nimble precision. Whirling Dervish is generally cast before a combat situation. The cantrip makes it easier to hit an opponent that coincides with the Realm used.

System: Realms for Whirling Dervish are identical to Life and Limb (see below). Thus, if the Denizen attempts to affect another fae, he must have that Realm to do so, while trying to destroy a precious object with one blow would require the use of Prop. The Denizen casting Whirling Dervish must spend a point of temporary Glamour to cast this cantrip.

For each success rolled, the character has a -1 modifier to the difficulty number when trying to hit the target of this cantrip. Whirling Dervish lasts one turn per success and cannot lower the difficulties in combat to less than two. Botches indicate that rolls against the intended target will have a higher difficulty than normal.

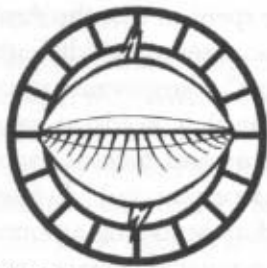
Type: Wyrd

☹☹☹☹☹ Life and Limb

Life and Limb is primarily cast before violent conflicts when the character knows things will come to blows. It augments the Denizen's instinct to strike vital areas on an opponent.

System: The Realm chosen to accompany this Art must coincide with the nature of the Denizen's target. One point of temporary Glamour must be spent for each target of Life and Limb. The number of successes becomes extra dice in the damage dice pool of the character. Additionally, if the Denizen wielding it rolls more perfect 10s (that aren't offset by 1s) than its target has in Stamina, the target loses a limb (or an integral part of an object). Life and Limb lasts until the end of the user's current combat or until one decisive blow has been struck in non-combat situations.

Type: Wyrd



Oneiromancy

"Of all the threats that we have faced in the past 30 years, the most troubling has been the reappearance of the Oneiromancers. If they are not stopped, I predict nothing less than the dissolution of the Dream Nation." So spoke Duke Dray at a recent secret reune of the Parliament of Dreams. Literally "divination through dreams," Oneiromancy is far more—the power of sleeping dreams made flesh. Believed to be a creation of the fomorians (who reputedly practiced it at levels far exceeding those discussed here), this Art is not widely practiced, even among the Dark-kin. It nevertheless remains a valuable tool in the hands of the returning Denizens. Changelings have found it particularly difficult to battle this Art, which effectively blurs the borders between reality and fantasy, sleep and waking. Some returning Denizens use it to steal or destroy changeling Dreamers, claim freeholds or for assassination. To affect someone with any of the following cantrips, the caster must have a valued personal item from the target. An initial point of Glamour is required to activate the link and a Glamour roll (difficulty 7) determines how many cantrips may be cast through the item before it is lost to the Dreaming. Finally, the caster must have seen the target at some point during the preceding day (doing so through scrying is acceptable).

Attribute: Intelligence

Oneirodyndia

This is the ability to send dreams. The caster has little control over the dream's actual content, but can dictate the type of dream—generally anything definable in two words or less (e.g., calm flying, sexual nightmare or good fortune). The caster may also plant one "image" in the dream (a sight, smell, melody, etc.).

System: The caster spends a point of Glamour and makes a contested Intelligence + Realm roll against the target's current Willpower or Banality (whichever is higher). For each success scored over the target's roll, the target will have the dream for one night. The Mists scale in the *Changeling* rulebook determines how well the target remembers the dream the next day.

Type: Chimerical

Oneirocrazia

Meaning "dream reader," this cantrip allows the Oneiromancer to see the content of another person's dreams as they occur. Though invaluable for turning up blackmail material or other treasured secrets, proper interpretation can be difficult. The Storyteller should relate dream images in a fragmentary manner so that the caster has to dig through the waking detritus that commonly infests most dreams.

System: The caster spends a point of Glamour and rolls her Intelligence + Realm (difficulty equals the target's current Willpower or Banality, whichever is higher). For each success the caster can read one hour of the target's dreams. The caster may also "capture" parts of the dream, storing them in a specially carved crystal. To capture these images the caster must spend an additional point of Glamour and make a Glamour roll (difficulty 7). The Oneiromancer may record one sequence of dream (e.g., the part where the dreamer is reliving when she murdered her husband) per success. Someone using this cantrip can "read" the crystal by making a successful Intelligence + Prop roll (difficulty 7). Each success reveals one dream portion within the capturing crystal.

Type: Chimerical

Oneirataxia

At this level the caster may cause the target's mid-night fantasies to intrude into his daylight hours, blurring the borderline between sleep and waking. His dreams become real, manifesting themselves as self-perpetuating chimera that only the Dreamer can see. (Though those with Kenning may catch glimpses of them.) These chimera are harmless phantasms with no material substance. They appear wholly real to the waking dreamer, however, and dog his footsteps throughout the day, driving some targets over the brink of madness (especially if he is hiding some sort of guilty secret).

System: The caster spends a point of Glamour and makes a contested roll of his Intelligence + Realm against the target's current Willpower or Banality (whichever is higher). For each success scored over the target's roll, the target experiences these waking dreams for one day.

Type: Chimerical

Syncope

Defined as the suspension of "heart" or vitality, this cantrip allows a Denizen to enter a dream and interact with the dreamer. The caster can create phantom chimera and define the overall nature of the dream (though

not the dreamer's reactions to it). The true danger of this cantrip rests in its ability to allow the caster to steal Stamina or Glamour from her victim. This is the well-known "hag-riding" or "succubus dream" featured so prominently in legends.

System: The caster spends a point of Glamour and rolls her current Glamour (difficulty equals the target's current Willpower or Banality, whichever is higher). For each success the caster can inhabit the target's dreams for one full sleep cycle. To steal health or Glamour the caster must spend an additional point of Glamour and make a contested Intelligence + Realm roll against the target's current Willpower or Banality (whichever is higher). The caster may steal a point of Glamour or Stamina for each success and may repeat this once every sleep cycle. The victim's Attributes may never drop below one in these dreams. Once a sleep cycle those with fae sight may make a Perception + Kenning roll (Difficulty 8) to notice that someone is "tampering" with their (or someone they are observing's) dreams. Once this has been determined, the dreamer can make an opposed Willpower roll to force the intruder out of his mind. To help someone else, the fae must awaken the dreamer, breaking the sleep cycle.

Type: Wyrd

Expiation

So named because of its ability to burn away the physical "dross" in its victims, this cantrip can literally turn Autumn inhabitants or material into dreams. The cantrip's victim actually becomes a living, sentient chimera and is left to cope with his new reality as best he can. Newly formed chimera don't automatically gain Redes, though supernatural powers translate into chimerical equivalents. Thus, the car salesman who cheated a Denizen is relatively defenseless (and terrified) in his new dream state, but a werewolf may still depend on chimerical equivalents of his Gifts. In the case of long term Expiation, the victim floats farther and farther from the waking world. Depending on how many people knew him, memories of the person fade at different rates (it's easier to make a transient drifter disappear than a well-known celebrity). Even physical manifestations of the person's life (photographs, birth certificate, etc.) fade in time, though they may spark someone's memory while they remain. Similarly, used with other Realms, it is far easier to make a set of keys disappear than a famous cathedral (not to mention the Banality backlash inherent to the latter example). The rumor that something along these lines may have happened to the missing King David has sent some of his subjects into a panic.

System: The caster spends a point of Glamour and rolls Intelligence + Realm against the Willpower or Banality of the target (whichever is higher). The number of successes scored over the target's roll determines the cantrip's duration. Those who have undergone the Changeling Way Ritual add +2 Willpower for the purpose of resisting this cantrip. Expiation does not work on Denizens, chimera, Thallain or other creatures who are already fully spirit, though it can force a Denizen from a possessed body or undo the Manifestation cantrip. A Denizen possessing a mundane body may suddenly find himself standing next to a very confused human chimera, while a Manifested Denizen or changeling may suddenly find herself in Phantom Form. Even those permanently Expiated may eventually regain their physical form, though this may become the object of a major quest. Once the last person has forgotten the victim, however (no matter how many successes were originally scored), no power except for the original caster's permission may bring them back — though they might live forever in the Dreaming.

One Success — One day. Those who have met the person only once or twice forget him.

Two Successes — One week. Distant associations forget him.

Three Successes — One month. Daily acquaintances forget him.

Four Successes — One year. Friends forget him. Minor physical attributes (photographs, personal effects, etc.) disappear or are misplaced.

Five Successes — Permanent. Loved ones and foes forget him. All remaining reminders of the person (bank records, personal letters, works of art, etc.) disappear, are misplaced or are attributed to others over the next few years.

Type: Wyrd

A Note on the Fae Realm

Changelings and Dark-kin may be cousins, but their differences have a direct effect on how they use cantrips on each other. Changelings wishing to affect Denizens must have the third level of the Fae Realm to do so, just as if they were chimera. The same holds true for Denizens trying to affect changelings. Affecting commoners or nobles or their own kind only calls for each to have the usual levels.



CHAPTER FIVE: BY THE SILVER BANNED

Storytelling

This chapter gives Storyteller-only information on integrating Dark-kin into the world of **Changeling**. It supplies ideas for running chronicles using Denizens as player characters and suggestions for mixing standard changelings and Dark-kin in an ongoing chronicle. Thoughts on mood and theme, some chronicle ideas the Storyteller may wish to use and information on the Augmen is also detailed here. Finally this chapter contains updated information on the fomorian courts and their relationship to their old lieutenants, the Denizens.

Mood

The most important aspect of mood in a **Denizens** game is mystery. Trapped in a world they never made, the Denizens must puzzle through their new and unique position in the cosmos. Walking a tightrope between worlds, they stand on the edge of infinite possibilities and, perhaps, hold much of the balance of power in their hands. Few Denizens can see this as yet and are left to fumble in the twilight that encompasses the Autumn World. They are part of the darkness, but may ultimately

be among its greatest victims. Every action by their adversaries should suggest several contradictory possibilities. The waking world is dark and fraught with danger. Constant pitfalls alternate with lightness and humor. Overall the mood reflects an elegant and sinister late Autumnal feeling. While bleaker, darker and more ominous than a game featuring normal changelings, a **Denizens** story should not entirely lose the whimsy that infuses **Changeling**.

Theme

Among the many possible themes a Storyteller may choose to develop in a Dark-kin game, the three detailed below should find expression within the overall story.

Mystery: The World of Darkness is intricate beyond description. The Denizens are at once the ultimate outsiders and the most consummate insiders. Strangers to the waking world, yet the product of its darkest dreams, they have a perspective unlike any other. They might not be familiar with the surface waters of modern society, but they have drunk deeply from the uncon-

scious tributaries that feed it and have a taste for its seamier secrets. Still, as with everyone else, Denizens see only isolated parts of this tapestry.

Horror: Denizens visiting the waking world must come to grips with the fact that they are, on some level, no more than figments of people's imaginations. This is enough to drive some mad, paralyzing them into inaction or driving them to great atrocities to prove their existence. Creatures of the shadows, the Denizens represent a new horror in the World of Darkness, but there are even bigger fish in the pond. Their old dark masters, the fomorians, do not care about Denizen history since the Tessarakonta and seek to reclaim the souls of their old followers, willing or no. The dark dreams of the prodigals are also beyond many Denizens' experiences. Worse, the unknown horror called Banality dissolves the Denizens' bodies and souls.

Paranoia: In a world where everything is strange and new, everything is suspect. The source of this paranoia should be subtle. Something that is only one degree out of kilter can be a lot more disturbing than something that is obviously wrong (and can, hence, be addressed). If the Storyteller does her job right the players should be turning in ever diminishing circles trying to watch their backs.

Chronicle Ideas

Below are several conflicts in which the players may find themselves embroiled.

Denizens versus Changelings

Facing their enemies of old, the returning Denizens must contend with the fact that the changelings have far more knowledge than they of the Autumn World and are not exactly weaklings in the Dreaming. The Kithain have a monopoly on the Dreamers, trods and freeholds surrounding the Near Dreaming, and are more resistant to Banality than the Dark-kin. Most changelings have no love for the Denizens who once so gladly slaughtered the fae at the behest of their fomorian overlords. Even those of the Unseelie Court are suspicious of the recent returnees. Although they seem more open to negotiations, many early arrivals among the adhenes have found the Shadow Court far more interested in manipulating than helping them. Since they were not made part of the Escheat, few changelings think twice about killing a Denizen. On the other hand, before they were foes during the War of Trees, changelings were no more strangers to the adhenes than one Denizen tribe is to another. Some

Denizens may realize that the Tessarakonta was really a war between two ancient and unknowable forces, neither of which had much interest in the welfare of the smaller spirits who served as their pawns. Some changelings and Dark-kin alike may decide that they have a much greater interest in pursuing their own destinies than serving these ancients. Fae of such a mind may find they have much in common.

Denizens versus Denizens

Just because the Denizens were on the same side during the War of Trees doesn't mean that they don't have contradictory agendas. Some Denizens are servitors of the fomorians, officially or in spirit; others have thought better of these old associations. The animosity between these two groups is heated and growing worse. Even barring this, there is no lack of animosity between different Denizen races or even within the same adhenes. These struggles may reflect disputes about land, Dreamers, ancient racial hatreds or political aspirations. Dark-kin political skullduggery includes the designs of each adhenes's leaders whose agendas partially include not letting their field agents (or their enemies in other adhenes) know too much. From day one the Storyteller should hint that their superiors might be keeping dark secrets from them. The players should be made to realize that they are working for huge, ancient and almost impenetrable secret societies. Ultimately any Denizen who endangers her people's interests (or her ruler's definition of it) is "regrettably" expendable.

Denizens versus Thallain

If the Dark-kin were the sergeants or captains in the fomorian ranks during the Tessarakonta, the Thallain were often foot soldiers. Even the lowliest Denizens generally view the Thallain as more than a trifle inferior. Thallain often resent the heavy-handed adhenes and are not above ambushing their "betters" when they think they can get away with it. Many Thallain have already flocked to the fomorian banner (even though it has not even been officially raised yet) and are less than friendly toward those who don't follow suit.

Denizens versus Humanity

A theme often overlooked in games where the protagonists are superhuman — the perils, pitfalls and little triumphs of dealing with everyday humanity may play a major role in a Denizens chronicle. Dark-kin may see humans as contradictory and unpredictable, as Glamour "food-tubes" or as wondrous creatures that have accom-

plished, and lost, much. They will very quickly learn how dangerous some of them can be. Denizens, for all their spirit and dark ferocity, are also fragile in many ways. To them, even mortals with a relatively low Banality are potential Autumn People. Even when not the focus of a story, everyday humanity and its dreams form the backdrop before which the Denizens act out their passion plays. On the other side of this coin, some Dark-kin have brought enchanted humans into the Dreaming against their will and created a brisk trade, using them as companions, slaves or sacrifices. Beyond this, there are those humans who have harnessed truly awesome powers, most poorly understood by the Dark-kin. Among these are the potent mages known among Denizens as the Lords of Order, some of whom were, ironically, partially responsible for opening the gates for the Denizen's return — and who may decide to try and put the genie back in the bottle. If this weren't enough, many adhene resent their dependence on humans to give them form in the waking world.

Denizens versus Fomorians

During the Tessarakonta most of the adhene served the fomorians so, now that they are returning, the Denizens should be in the pink, right? Not necessarily. The problem with serving voracious, alien and nigh-omnipotent monstrosities from the "under-psyche" is that they see you, at best, as little more than a favored pet and as eminently expendable. Denizens may decide that there are things they like about the human world (music, books, architecture, people) and that Endless Winter is just going to muck things up. Just because great-great grandpa fir-bholg served the fomorians doesn't mean that the modern day player character carries that obligation (though, of course, the fomorians may feel differently). Independent Dark-kin fear that ancient pacts may force them to serve against their will and dread the awakening of the old ones almost as much as do the Kithain. Then again, a number of Dark-kin have been quick to volunteer their services as agents of chaos in the Dreaming and the Autumn World.

The White Court has been awake for only a short time and the Red Court even less. They are just opening their eyes, getting their bearings and stretching forth their hands. There are strange movements here and there — portents and warnings. Other dark servants of the Fomorian Dream are also abroad. Creatures once thought destroyed or banished from the sane realms, some of these alien monstrosities have no more in common with the adhene than they do with the Kithain or

humanity. Even the wisest Denizen oracles know little of these foul Overlords — the generals of the Fomorian Dream. Nevertheless, the Dark-kin have insights into the fomorians not shared by the changelings. Ancient temples deep in the Tenebrous Realms hold bloody secrets from the Fimbulwinter Country and dark priest-hoods who have waited millennia for their masters' return.

Denizens versus Vampires

While the destruction of Ravana and most of his vampire clan was keenly felt in the Dreaming and still reverberates among the Denizens, most know almost nothing of vampires. Those who choose to involve themselves with the Kindred are best warned that these creatures are practitioners of the most Byzantine and treacherous multi-generation plots in the world. Denizens who get involved in the Kindred's schemes soon find themselves looking over their shoulders and never knowing whom to trust.

Denizens versus Werewolves

Dark-kin are more aware of the Garou than one might expect. Traveling the Green Paths of Balor has led some Denizens to the Middle Umbra. Most werewolves who know of Denizens see them as spirits (or, more often, Banes) like any other. Most knowledgeable of the adhene are the fuaths who are ardent defenders of "Mother Gaia." Of all the Garou tribes, the Fianna remain the most knowledgeable about the Denizens, though even they know little. Recent alliances between some within the werewolf nobility and the sidhe make it less likely that contacts between the adhene and the Garou Nation will be amicable any time in the near future.

Denizens versus Mages

Those magicians whom the changelings refer to as Hidden Ones and the Denizens call "Lords of Order," champion the forces of Banality and, hence, require that the secrets of the supernatural never be exposed to light. The Lords of Order portray themselves as part of a benign, ordered entity holding the forces of chaos at bay. To them, most Denizens are chaotic, hostile and alien marauders from beyond the boundaries of reality. In general, Denizens investigating any group of mages find themselves in unknown territory.

Denizens versus Wraiths

Wraiths do not physically share the world of the fae and are, thus, even less knowable than the previously

mentioned groups. Of all the adhenes, only the keremet who wander the trackless wastes of the Black Paths of Balor have any contact with the Shadowlands, and even that has been rendered extremely difficult by the recent Maelstrom.

Augmen

As described in **Dreams and Nightmares**, the Augmen is the tendency for changelings to increase their Birthrights or Frailties as they travel more deeply into the Dreaming. The Denizens lose power as they approach the hostile Autumn Realms. As with changelings, this means that in the Far or Deep Dreaming, even an average Denizen becomes quite powerful, though this must be measured against the strength of their likely adversaries. In the far reaches of the Dreaming, there are vast and timeless leviathans that make even the most potent Denizens appear as insignificant as insects.

Near Dreaming

• Acheri

Plague Nervosa: The acheri no longer has to spend a point of Glamour to extend her shadow.

Enticement: Whenever using his guile to lead someone off the track of virtue, an acheri adds +2 dice to his Charisma and Manipulation dice pools (no additional bonus in the Dioniae Ariá), even if this gives the Denizen a temporary Attribute of over five.

Rebound: The acheri character must take two subjects of addiction.

The Scarlet Ban: The Scarlet Ban does not increase or decrease with the Augmen.

• Aonides

Grace of Calliope: All aonides add an extra point to either their Manipulation or Charisma, even if it brings them above the maximum of five.

Adonis's Ravaging: The victim not only loses Glamour, but his thoughts are so fixated on the aonide that some of the Glamour he collects the next day goes to the muse, as long as the victim is in sight (the muse rolls a contested Manipulation + Subterfuge roll versus the victim's Willpower).

Arachne's Folly: The muse becomes far more jealous and sure of her own prowess. This Frailty not only applies to the aonide's area of expertise, but any related areas of artistic endeavor. Additionally, all Empathy rolls are at +1 difficulty because the muse is too arrogant to see beyond her own interests.

• Fir-bholg

Breath of the Firchlís: The fir-bholg's difficulty in affecting the Firchlís goes down by one point (difficulty 7). The Birthright's effects last until the fir-bholg leaves the area or for one hour per success. The effect's strength and duration are not cumulative with additional castings.

Eochaid's Hunger: After the first week without his special food the fir-bholg must make a daily Willpower roll (difficulty 8) to resist eating the first source he sees.

• Fuaths

Beast Tongue: The fuath can communicate with both plants and animals. Of course, the limitations of this communication are dictated by the creature being addressed. This ability also gives the fuath +1 die to all Charisma and Manipulation rolls involving the elemental inanimae.

Animal Nature: The fuath's movement increases to 25 yards + four times their Dexterity per turn in their chosen environment. Fuath may all add +2 to their Stamina, even if it brings it over the human maximum of five. Finally, the fuath's natural weaponry becomes more potent with an additional +1 aggravated damage. One point of Glamour allows the fuath to extend or retract these attributes as needed for an entire Scene.

Maenad's Madness: The fuath's madness becomes more pronounced. The difficulty of telling friend from foe increases in this state (Perception + Empathy difficulty 9). Fuaths will still never attack another of their own kind in their madness. To resist this frenzy the fuath may make a Willpower roll every turn after the first (difficulty 8). When the fuath has accumulated as many successes as she has permanent Glamour, she may break-off the attack.

• Keremet

The Shadowed Way: The Shadowed Way does not increase with distance into the Dreaming.

Will to Power: As long as the keremet has at least two points of Willpower she has the equivalent of the Merit: Iron Will and can resist the harshest physical tortures. She is immune to all but the rarest chimerical diseases.

The Pact of Dagda: The Pact of Dagda does not change, no matter how deeply the keremet wanders into the Dreaming.

Melancholia: The keremet's emotions become even more dead and he suffers a +2 difficulty to all Social rolls

and is at +3 difficulty to all Empathy or other rolls to determine what other people are thinking.

- **Moirae**

Aural Perception: The player may roll her character's current Glamour (difficulty 6) and may divine one "snapshot" image pertaining to the person's future actions per success. The moirae receives an automatic success on any Soothsay cantrip.

Fata: This Birthright does not change with the Augmen.

Superstition: For obvious reasons, Superstition increases as one travels more deeply into the Dreaming. Moirae can only occasionally absolve themselves of Nightmares or lessen the severity by reversing what they have done or making some form of atonement (subject to Storyteller discretion). Any violation of a Geas, Ban or other oath by a moirae incurs two extra dice of intensity to the usual penalty.

- **Naraka**

Wrath of Kali Ma: Naraka's searing flame from their mouths now causes aggravated damage. The player rolls a number of dice equal to the character's permanent Glamour (difficulty 7) and inflicts one level of damage per success. This attack can be dodged as normal. This birthright costs one point of Glamour.

Arms of Ravana: The player rolls versus the naraka's current Glamour (difficulty 6). Each success adds one extra die to Melee or Brawl rolls, or may add an extra attack for every two arms (rounded up). The number of arms manifested by the use of this Birthright is also equal to the number of successes rolled. This Birthright costs one Glamour and lasts for one hour per success, or until the naraka decides to revert to her original form.

Curse of Shiva: The naraka's weakness for music increases substantially. When in the presence of music a naraka must drop what she is doing and dance, unless she makes a number of successes equal to her Willpower (difficulty varies with the quality of the music). Successes indicate how many turns the character can go without succumbing to the effects of this Frailty. Naraka can still spend Willpower to ignore this Frailty (for the duration of exposure to the source of the music).

Far Dreaming

- **Acheri**

Plague Nervosa: In the Far Dreaming all the usual cures are at -1 to their efficacy.

Enticement: Whenever using his guile to lead someone off the track of virtue, an acheri adds +2 dice to his

Charisma and Manipulation dice pools (+3 in the Dioniae Ariá), even if this gives the Denizen a temporary Attribute of over five.

Rebound: The acheri character must take three subjects of addiction. All rolls to resist these vices go up by +1 difficulty.

- **Aonides**

Grace of Calliope: All aonides add another point to either their Manipulation or Charisma, even if it brings them above the maximum of five.

Adonis's Ravaging: The victim no longer resists. The player rolls the aonide's Manipulation + Subterfuge (difficulty equals the target's permanent Willpower) and takes a point of temporary Glamour for every success. This also applies to any Glamour drained the next day.

Arachne's Folly: The muse becomes foolish in her presumption, gaining the Flaw: Overconfident in all areas of artistic endeavor. Additionally, all Empathy rolls are at +2 difficulty because the muse is too arrogant to see beyond her own interests.

- **Fir-bholg**

Breath of the Firchlís: The fir-bholg strongly affects her surroundings. Difficulty in affecting the Firchlís goes down by one point (difficulty 6) and may even gnaw away stable regions such as homesteads. The Birthright's effects last until the fir-bholg leaves the area or for one day per success. The effect's strength and duration are not cumulative with additional castings.

Eochaid's Hunger: After three days without his special food, the fir-bholg must make a daily Willpower roll (difficulty 9) to resist eating the first source he sees, no matter the consequence. When his Stamina reaches one, he begins to lose two levels of health per day.

- **Fuaths**

Beast Tongue: In the Far Dreaming the fuath can communicate with plants, animals and even minerals. Of course, the limitations of this communication are dictated by the creature being addressed. This ability also gives the fuath +2 dice to all Charisma or Manipulation rolls involving the elemental inanimae.

Animal Nature: The fuath's movement increases to 25 yards + five times their Dexterity per turn in their chosen environment. Fuath may all add +3 to their Stamina, even if it brings it over the human maximum of five. The fuath's natural weaponry becomes truly deadly, increasing aggravated damage by +2. The fuath no longer has to expend Glamour to use these attacks in the Far Dreaming.

Maenad's Madness: The fuath's madness becomes even more frenzied and animalistic. The difficulty of telling friend from foe increases (Perception + Empathy, difficulty 10). A fuath will still not attack another of her own kind in her madness. To resist this frenzy the fuath may make a Willpower roll only every *other* turn after the first (difficulty 8).

- **Keremet**

Will to Power: As long as the keremet has at least one point of Willpower, she has the equivalent of the Merit: Iron Will and can resist all physical tortures. Finally, for the purpose of resisting wound penalties, the keremet's *temporary* Willpower subtracts half of its value (rounded up) against health penalties from any injuries against her overall health level.

Melancholia: The keremet's emotions become almost completely dead and he suffers a +3 difficulty to all Social rolls and is at +4 difficulty to all Empathy or other rolls to determine what other people are feeling.

- **Moiræ**

Aural Perception: The player may roll her character's *permanent* Glamour (difficulty 6) and divine one "snapshot" image pertaining to the person's future actions per success. The moiræ receives two automatic successes on any Soothsay cantrip.

Superstition: Moiræ can only occasionally absolve themselves of Nightmares or lessen the severity by making some form of atonement (subject to Storyteller discretion). Any violation of a Geas, Ban or other oath by a moiræ incurs three extra dice of intensity to the usual penalty.

- **Naraka**

Wrath of Kali Ma: The naraka's flame attack causing aggravated damage no longer costs any Glamour. The player rolls a number of dice equal to the character's *permanent* Glamour (difficulty 6) and does one level of damage per success.

Arms of Ravana: The player rolls the naraka's *permanent* Glamour (difficulty 6). Each success adds one extra die to Melee or Brawl rolls or may add an extra attack for every two arms (rounded up). The number of arms manifested by the use of this Birthright is also equal to the number of successes rolled. This Birthright costs one Glamour and lasts for one day per success or until the naraka decides to revert to her original form.

Curse of Shiva: Here the curse is quite difficult to ignore, even in life threatening situations. The naraka must make a contested Willpower roll versus the

musician's Manipulation + Performance roll. If the musician scores even one success over the naraka, the naraka must dance until the music stops. All of the naraka's rolls are at +3 difficulty while so entranced and the naraka may no longer spend Willpower to ignore these effects.

Deep Dreaming

- **Acheri**

Plague Nervosa: The acheri may create multiple shadows by rolling her current Glamour (difficulty 6, one shadow per success).

Enticement: The acheri adds +3 dice to his Charisma and Manipulation dice pools (+4 in the Dioniae Ariá) when luring someone from the path of virtue.

Rebound: The acheri character must take four subjects of addiction. All rolls to resist these vices are made at +2 difficulty.

- **Aonides**

Grace of Calliope: All aonides add yet another point to their Manipulation or Charisma, even if it brings them above the maximum of five.

Adonis's Ravaging: Beyond the effects in the Far Dreaming, once seduced the target suffers +1 difficulty in all future attempts to resist the muse's advances (even if they return to lesser Dream Realms).

Arachne's Folly: The muse becomes totally overbearing and lost in her own virtues, gaining the Flaw: Overconfident. Additionally, all Empathy rolls are at +3 difficulty because the muse is too arrogant to see beyond her own interests.

- **Fir-bholg**

Breath of the Firchlís: The fir-bholg becomes a true nexus of chaotic Dream energies. Difficulty in affecting the Firchlís goes down by one point (difficulty 5). The effect's strength and duration are not cumulative with additional castings.

Eochaid's Hunger: After two days without his special food, the fir-bholg must make a daily Willpower roll (difficulty 10) to resist eating the first source he sees.

- **Fuaths**

Beast Tongue: In the Deep Dreaming the fuath can communicate with any sort of naturae, no matter how alien. This ability also gives the fuath +3 dice to all Social interactions with the elemental inanimae.

Animal Nature: The fuath's movement increases to 50 yards + five times their Dexterity per turn in their chosen environment. Fuath may all add +4 to their



Stamina, even if it brings it over the human maximum of five. The fuath's natural weaponry adds +3 aggravated damage to all attacks.

Maenad's Madness: The fuath's madness becomes even more frenzied and animalistic. The difficulty of telling friend from foe requires a successful Perception + Empathy roll (difficulty 10). In the Deep Dreaming a fuath may even attack another of its own kind (Perception + Empathy difficulty 8). To resist this frenzy the fuath may make a Willpower roll every *other* turn after the first (difficulty 9).

• **Keremet**

Will to Power: The keremet has the equivalent of the Merit: Iron Will and can resist the harshest physical tortures under any circumstances and cannot drop below one Willpower. Finally, for the purpose of resisting wound penalties, the keremet's *permanent* Willpower subtracts its value against health penalties from any injuries against her overall health level.

Melancholia: The keremet's emotions are completely dead. He suffers a +5 difficulty to all Social rolls and automatically fails any Empathy rolls to determine what other people are thinking.

• **Moiræ**

Aural Perception: The player may roll her character's permanent Glamour (difficulty 5) and may divine two "snap-shot" images pertaining to the person's future actions per success. The moiræ receives three automatic successes on any Soothsay cantrip.

Superstition: Moiræ can only lessen the severity of their Nightmares by leaving the area. Any violation of a Geas, Ban or other oath by a moiræ incurs four extra dice of intensity to the usual penalty.

• **Naraka**

Wrath of Kali Ma: Naraka issue forth a searing flame from their mouths causing aggravated damage. The player rolls a number of dice equal to the character's *permanent* Glamour (difficulty 5) and does one level of damage per success.

Arms of Ravana: The player rolls the naraka's permanent Glamour (difficulty 4). The number of arms manifested by the use of this Birthright is equal to the number of successes rolled. Each success also adds one extra die to Melee or Brawl rolls or may add an extra attack for every arm. This Birthright costs one Glamour and lasts until the naraka decides to revert to her original form.

Curse of Shiva: Even in life threatening situations, the naraka must make a contested Willpower roll versus

the musician's Manipulation + Performance roll at a +1 difficulty. If the musician scores even one success over the naraka, the naraka must dance until the music stops. All of the naraka's rolls are at +4 difficulty while so entranced.

The Fomorians

King Daedelus Fiona ascended the summit of the Crescent Needle. The tallest mountain in a dozen realms, its slender peak threaded the crescent moon that appeared eternally at its apex. Ahead of him Lady Stratos stepped serenely on the snow's surface, her gaze the only warmth in that cold, bleak land. Black roiling storm clouds spiraled in from every corner of the Dreaming.

Daedelus breathed heavily, feeling his lungs fill with the icy crystals that swirled in the air. He did not understand. He had asked Stratos for a way to defeat his enemies, the Elder-Darks, and so save his kingdom. Stratos told him to pick a willow-wand from his garden and to follow. A dozen competing winter storms battered the mountain, blanketing the world in a shroud of howling white, obliterating all but Daedelus and Stratos and the willow-wand. Daedelus held the willow-wand aloft as the storm raged in his ears. Thunder cracked as if nearby peaks were smashed to splinters, crashing to ruin at the mountain's roots.

"Behold," Stratos cried, "I give you the Fomorian Dream. It is thunder, lightning, this nightmare gale."

The slender, fragile willow branch was bent but unharmed by the storm. Daedelus bowed his understanding to Dagda's daughter and followed her back down the mountain.

— "The Song of Daedelus," from *The Book of the Crimson Sidhe*

The Seelie Court's rulers have assured their subjects that if the fomorians are indeed returning, defeating them is simply a matter of having the bravest hearts, the sharpest blades and the most potent magic. The fomorians are dark and ancient creatures, puissant and terrible to be sure, but there is always hope. This is but one of the lies that the fae leadership has told its followers. Perhaps it is better than telling them the truth. More than simple monsters or evil chimerical geniuses, the fomorians are lodged deeply in the murkiest depths of the collective

human psyche. It has comforted some changelings to think of the fomorians as such an abstraction. If the fomorians are the shadow of human evil: What of it? Some chimera can say the same and they can be defeated. Not merely reflections, however, the fomorians are the sum and total of all that is dark and murderous in the human heart. It is the fomorians who perpetuate, if not necessarily direct, much that is wrong in the World of Darkness. They are inimical to human and fae alike and paving the way for their imminent return. Defeating them once and for all is "merely" a matter of cleansing every human soul of violence, hatred and corruption. It is fitting that those who once battled the fomorians likened them to a force of nature, for one could no more fight them than capture a tempest wind.

In the great war that ended the last age, the Tuatha dé Danaan and the fomorians were opposite sides of the same coin. One represented humanity's highest aspirations, the other its darkest fears, but both were as far above the young races of Kithain and Denizens as humans are above a laboratory rat. Still, for all their high handedness, the Tuatha dé Danaan were powerful protectors of the Earth-bound fae. The Children of Dana are gone now, and the Fomorian Dream rises again. This may, in part, explain why some commoner leaders were so quick to capitulate to sidhe leadership after the Accordance War. The sidhe too may be high-handed and arrogant, but this only means that they represent the one spark of the Tuatha dé Danaan that remains in the Known Dreaming.

In this struggle, most knowledgeable Kithain see the Denizens as the first darkling servitors returning at the forefront of the Elder Darks. They see a band of black storm clouds spread across the horizon, terrible in its single-minded intensity. They do not see the divisions that now divide the fomorians' old army. Much time has passed since the War of Trees and the Dark-kin have built their own cultures without their old masters' blessing. Indeed, some Denizens hold as much animosity toward their old generals — for leading them into defeat and then abandoning them — as many commoners hold toward the sidhe. Still, the Kithain may have a point. The fomorians' first move seems to be to gather their old servants. They once ruled over the various adhenes



through fear and powerful pacts, some of which seem to be active again. Those Denizens who choose not to serve may soon be culled from the ranks.

Each of the Elder-Darks is different; the ancient legends speak of some that were giants and wholly alien in appearance, while others took on human or fae guises, appearing beautiful beyond comprehension or foul beyond belief. Tales of the War of Trees tell of some that froze the bravest hearts by their mere appearance, causing madness or death. While some fae believe it possible that some of these creatures might be related to what the Garou call the Wyrms, the thought that the Garou's enemies the fomori — mere degenerate human mutations born of tainted technology — have much of a connection with the Elder-Darks seems remote. Legends record that there are three Fomorian Dreams: The White Court which was imprisoned in the Forest of Lies, the Red Court which lies chained beneath Kureksarra and the Green Court which voluntarily imprisoned itself below the Sea of Silver. There are also legends of a fourth group, the Black Court, though (if it ever existed) it did not manifest itself during the Tessarakonta. Some believe that the Black Court is an amalgamation of the other three courts and will only appear at the first true evening of the Evernight.

The White Court

Cunning, calculating and unimaginably cruel, the White Court is at once the most human and inhuman of the fomorian courts. Seemingly incapable of feeling the "lesser" human emotions, the White Court practices terrible tortures and spells of alteration on their unfortunate victims, all in the hope of sparking some sort of feeling in themselves. The White Court represents the youngest of the Fomorian Dreams, and its members are subtle in their wintry dance. Even in slumber, their desolate dreams formed the heart of the Forest of Lies, corrupting and twisting those who dwell there. Two great kingdoms, both Seelie and Unseelie, lie at the Forest's edge near a shadow of Arcadia, and observe the original tradition of leadership by which the Seelie rule during the Spring and Summer and the Unseelie rule the rest of the year. Since the White Court's awakening, however, the Winter months become increasingly longer. The Unseelie ruler, Queen Marianna Ailil, may or may not be under the White Court's sway. Fiercely independent, her soldiers have been involved with clashes against those of

the fuath glaistig, Queen Lir of the Winterweir. A major point of contention seems to be over a Green Path of Balor that leads into the Middle Umbra and beyond. Meanwhile, the White Court itself has been active. Some theorize that the first of them awoke during the Resurgence 30 years ago. Since then their phantom hand has reached far indeed, influencing events throughout the Forest, the Blotkeldur swamps, Kureksarra (where they await the awakening of their crimson brethren) and in the Autumn World. Perhaps the most gruesome of the White Court's servitors are a spider-like race known as the Aslynthi (see Appendix II). When they appear in faerie guise, those of the White Court are pale, gaunt and beautiful beyond description, reminding some of the sidhe.

The Red Court

Unlike the elusive White Court, there is reputedly little subtlety about the Red Court. Masters of war, lords of fire, poison and chaos, they have little need for deception except for the occasional tactical deceit to keep the war flags flying. Thunderous, blood-sodden intelligences that underlie the human psyche, the red fomorians have killed as many people in their sleep as the combined armies of the world. The War-Dream, which has long slept beneath Kureksarra's killing fields, now spreads beyond the Red Plain's dusty borders. Throughout the surrounding Dreaming, competing nobles, barbarian warlords and would-be world conquerors position themselves for the greater war that surely is to come. Some seek out alliances to defend their borders while others attack their neighbors to curry favor with the Red Court. Among these petitioners are various Denizen tribes, as well as giants, the great wyrms of land and air, and even stranger creatures. And yet no pronouncement has been issued; no single member of the Red Court has actually been seen. Indeed, it is widely believed by those who study such things, that it is not the entire court but just one of its members (a creature known as Phlogiston the Jester) that has awakened. Even if true, however, one is more than enough. The Five Great War Beasts continue their eternal battles over the nine key fragments to the Triumph Casque of Sorrows, but even this has changed. The oldest of the Beasts, Lord Harroth the Mute of House Balor, has abruptly retired from the field, placing his forces in a defensive posture. While some believe this is because he was losing the war, others



theorize that he has already won. General over several tribes of fir-bholg and naraka, Harroth is rumored to be furthering the Red Court's designs in the Autumn World. It is believed that the Red Court battles not for any particular territorial or political ends, but simply for the love of unbridled destruction.

The Green Court

Where the White Court is subtle and elusive, the Green Court is simply unfathomable. As far beyond its fellow courts as they are above the younger races, the Green Court's Dream is a shadow of another time, wholly incomprehensible to the wisest of oracles. There are those among the Denizens who worship the Green Court as distant gods. The priests of these little known cults claim that it was the green fomorians whose dreams fashioned the entirety of the Dreaming before the birth

of man. Shrouded in the mists of prophecy and legend, the Green Court still rests in its timeless self-imposed slumber beneath the Sea of Silver. Undeclared in battle during the War of Trees, they scoured entire continents of the Dreaming to destroy those who opposed them. Even the combined might of Arcadia was unable to defeat them and it was by their own volition that they went below the Silver Sea. No one knows what secret cabal decided this action. Perhaps they simply decided it was not yet their time. Many believe that the subsequent departure of the Tuatha dé Danaan from the Known Dreaming was part of the price paid for the Green Court's withdrawal. The Green Court shows little sign that it has shattered its bonds, but the stirrings within the Red and White Courts, and the recent frenetic activity of the moiræ, seems to bode ill for the future.

APPENDIX: A NIGHTMARE GALLERY

This section includes profiles of some of the personalities mentioned in earlier chapters and several others who are currently at large in both the Dreaming and the Autumn World, including individuals antagonistic toward the Dark-kin. It further details the Triumph Casque of Sorrows. This chapter is suggested for use by Storytellers only.

Anasta-dal

Things have become much more difficult in the Fields of late. They have gained some help from an unexpected corner, however. The silhouette of a tall, armor-clad woman with a "horned helmet" has become a much-discussed item among the gossips of the Fields. The Fieldlings do not know whether their rescuer — variously described as red or brown haired — is a Seelie troll hero from the distant mountains or a sidhe knight under some sort of curse. She is neither. A fir-bholg from the Silver River region, Anasta-dal was leader of a small tribe until servants of the White Court destroyed her followers in an ambush. Now, seeking revenge and working to protect the helpless against the designs of the Elder-Darks, she has taken up homesteading in the Bullydale Wastes and become a terror to those who make their living by killing others. Several such groups have

tried to trap her, but so far with no success. Her legend — and the price on her head — continue to grow.



King Ezag

King Ezag of the fir-bholg is an ancient and inhumanly intelligent sorcerer. Powerful in the extreme, he rules over a vast and subtle kingdom carved into mountains throughout the Middlemarch. He claims to be the son of Eochaid himself (one of the first fir-bholg rulers); if true this would make him old indeed. Ezag is known to have been alive during the Tessarakonta and was one of the few of his race to reject both the fomorians and the Tuatha dé Danaan, earning the respect and enmity of both. Believing that the fir-bholg have a destiny which transcends both of those races, he has killed agents from

both camps who have recently visited his mountain abode. Towering over even most ogres, the king has a great hoary white beard and wears a belt hung heavy with troll skulls which he "plucked" with his great scimitar Darklick (a treasure supposedly equaling Caliburn in power, reputedly able to cut through any substance). He remembers the Tessarakonta with personal animosity and dispatched his agents to the Autumn World when he foresaw the opening of the Twilight Paths. His agents are among the most prescient and clever abroad in the world and have no love for changelings. Nevertheless he has not made any overt attempt to export war to any changeling lands and has apparently has contacts within the Shadow Court.

Dr. Ivy Belsen

It was "life unworthy of life." But for an acheri it was a virtual utopia. The opportunities for medical research

were literally endless: Bodies could be injected with contaminated vaccines, submerged in boiling or freezing water, or put in chambers for high and low altitude tolerance. Skulls bursting, mutilating or killing in any number of ways without the tedium of anesthesia, proper surgical technique or hygiene, such a feast of corruption! Unfortunately the end of the war put a stop to all that. A quick change of bodies left behind any fear of retribution. Now, under a new name, in borrowed flesh, Dr. Ivy Belsen is the director of a major pharmaceuticals company. Lionized as a philanthropist by the press and substituting advanced gene splicing technologies and

dream-grafting for Zyklon B and typhus injections, Ivy Belsen harvests terror-laden Glamour from the dying, creating chimerical abominations never before seen in the Near Dreaming. Although she is somewhat adept in hiding her true identity behind borrowed bodies of both sexes, the population of chimerical flies always increases when she enters an area.

Queen Lir

Widely known as the Frost Queen, there are few in the Winterweir who do not fear this powerful fuath monarch. The offspring of a fuath sorceress and a powerful fomorian lord, Lir spent her formative years in a hidden temple dedicated to the White Court.

When she emerged she swiftly took power within her own tribe, killing its high priestess, then exporting war and terror throughout the Forest. Ruthless and ambitious, Lir now rules much of the Winterweir with a cruel but artful hand. The tribes of the surrounding woodland



are almost evenly split between the Frost Queen's forces and those who oppose her. Lir appears as either a typical fuath with goat-legs in her Dioniae Ariá or as a beautiful and commanding woman with white hair in her human form. The Frost Queen has many strange abilities and is rumored to be able to freeze her victims solid with a glance. Her enemies decorate her wintry garden as frozen statues, each with their hearts or eyes missing, but still alive and aware. Although she has suffered the occasional setback, her power seems to grow with each passing winter. Now, with the awakening of the second fomorian court and the continuing dissolution of the troll-fuath alliance that opposes her, it would seem that there is little stopping her.

Lord Udri

A f t e r Mahâaurava's near total destruction in 1999, most of the naraka have chosen to abandon their homeland in search of more hospitable climes. This exodus was not total, however. Lord Udri was a learned astronomer, as well as a wise ruler, and contemplated the works of Heaven from his great jeweled observatory. When the spiritual shock waves ripped through the Dreaming from the Samvarta or Doomsday Cloud, Udri was looking straight into the heart of the explosion. White heat and forces unmentionable tore around him, laying waste to the region and killing everyone in his kingdom — except for him. Udri now lives in the jeweled slag remnants of his palatial observatory and has taken on the trappings of a holy man. Those naraka who remain in Mahâaurava view him with religious adoration and follow his commandments

in the hopes of currying celestial favor. Indeed, to many Udri has become synonymous with the Samvarta (even approaching godhood in many of their minds) and not without reason. Udri appears as a black, male outline surrounded by the nuclear fires that facilitated his rebirth. His followers sacrifice the trespassers who come through the lands to the Samvarta. Unfortunately such visitors are few and far between, and some of the more zealous converts travel to other Dream Realms and even the Waking to procure sacrifices for their god. Mean-

while, Udri himself is seldom seen but spends most of his time in his observatory pondering the Lemniscate and the wheels of creation.

Tewquille, the Shadow Knight

On the borderlands between the Shadowlands of the dead and the mindscape of the Dreaming, Tewquille walks the Black Paths of Balor. Of his mortal life little is known, though most believe he was one of the holy knights under Sir Roland, a servitor of King Charlemagne in the late 8th Century. Breaking his oath to God and king for the love of a faerie woman, he was killed and cursed to wander forever as a shade in the



twilight lands. The keremet's first appearance as the Shadow Knight was not until several centuries later when he appeared as the leader of L'Armée Furieuse. Of his life since that time what little is known remains pure conjecture. Bartering in human souls and pieces of dream, the Shadow Knight has reportedly gained mysterious powers of transformation, allowing him to take any form and to similarly affect his foes. Some stories describe powers with which he transformed fae into animals until

they capitulated to his demands. Further tales say that he can call dark storms from the realms of the dead, creating extrusions of the Tempest in the Dreaming. Supposedly one of the Soul Bearers — those keremet who ferry sidhe and human souls between Arcadia and the Waking — the Shadow Knight remains an elusive and compelling figure.

Harroth the Mute (House Balor)

Possibly the oldest of the Five Great Beasts who battle for the key to the Triumph Casque, Harroth is most notable for being the only one of the Five to have served the fomorians during the Tessarakonta. With the rumored awakening of the Kureksarra fomorians, many believe that he has again taken up his old position among the Red Court. If true, he has not used this newfound power to crush his Red Plains opponents in the field, but has instead moved his troops into a defensive posture while the other Beasts continue to fight. Reliable rumors have placed Harroth in the Autumn World, a possibility most troubling to both the Seelie Court and the leadership of House Balor. Other faerie luminaries also fear that, because of his renewed relationship with the Red Court, Lord Harroth may be immune to the Mists, retaining his full memories and Dreaming aspect. If so, his rumored return to the Waking may soon vastly tilt the balance of power toward the Shadow Court.

The Aslynthi

Frightened rumors scuttle and whisper from tree to tree about something wholly unnatural abroad in the Forest and beyond. A shade long banished from the realms of the sane again casts its chill touch across the land. Inhumanly intelligent and subtle, the spidery Aslynthi are nothing like the mindless arachnids slain by Duke Asterlan in the Forest of Lies. Now known to dwell in the heart of the Forest, and in the adjoining Winterweir and the Blotkeldur, they do the bidding of the White Court. During the Miririm the Aslynthi departed the Known Realms and many believe they returned to their home in the Otherwhere to scheme their eventual return. Little is known about the Aslynthi, even by their former Denizen allies. They are lovers of beauty and possess their own culture, music and art, most of which is predicated on others' suffering. Sharing their masters' penchant for cruelty and torture, the spiders cast a darkling fear into the hearts of even the staunchest warriors.

It is believed that, despite a plethora of ranks and titles (most unpronounceable by the human tongue), they are roughly divided into two castes — a warrior species and a holy caste that worships the Fomorian Dream. The warriors are large, black and covered with spiny black hair. Their monstrous chelicerae can bite through even enchanted armor and they have barbed, shiny black hooks at the end of each leg; their strength and speed is almost beyond comprehension. Perhaps even more terrifying, they do not have to move on the ground but negotiate the low nighttime sky trods on invisible webs, which span the Dreaming ether. Attacking in groups of a dozen or more, it is said that during the War of Trees their numbers could blacken an entire sky.

The holy caste Aslynthi are far more delicate in appearance and radiate a crystalline beauty. Slender and lithe, they consist of a clear, glistening material that reveals their translucent internal organs and neon blood. Their front legs have several finger-like appendages with which they manipulate their arcane artifacts. Their faces can take on the mockery of a fae visage, allowing them to speak with the lesser races in a sibilant tone. Well versed in numerous Arts, including many unknown to Kithain and Denizen alike, during the Tessarakonta they occupied an Overlord position in the fomorian hierarchy eclipsing all but the highest ranking Dark-kin. There are those of both castes who can literally wear fae skin, thereby disguising themselves as their victims and wandering the Dreaming. Now they go forth in the Winter Court's name, spreading terror, subversion and death. Indeed, the Aslynthi are quite knowledgeable about both their changeling enemies and their Denizen rivals. As the result of lengthy torture sessions with both, they have dissected both groups' weaknesses, strengths and secret desires.

The Triumph Casque of Sorrow

A weapon of unspeakable power, even unopened its effects were immense, raining poison and fire down upon its bearer's enemies as they sought to stand against him. Rumors of its power when opened speak of the utter annihilation of foes, instantaneously rendering them nothing more than ash. It is said that there are no defenses against the casque's powers. Though the Red Fomorian king broke the casque's key into nine fragments, rumor tells that some have been reassembled, and with each, another calamity threatens. Two key fragments have been assembled; two fomorian courts now awaken....